

# THE ECLECTIC THEOSOPHIST

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*A Quarterly Journal  
of the Wisdom Religion  
Following the  
Blavatsky/Point Loma  
Tradition*

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## Buddist Suggestions for a Just Society

LAMA DOBOOM TULKU

*Excerpted from "The Buddhist Path to Enlightenment"  
Available Fall 1995 from Point Loma Publications*



The Buddha stated in *The Dharani of the Glimmering Jewel*, Though I have taught the noble doctrine, if you who have heard it do not put it into practice, then just as a patient who carries a bag full of medicines without taking them will not be cured, my teachings will not serve their purpose.

The implication of this passage is that well-being and the deliverance from suffering depends entirely upon practicing the *Dharma*, i.e., cultivating the path to enlightenment.

This also suggests that in Buddhism the ultimate safeguard is the *Dharma* itself.

Among the Triple Gem, or Buddhist Trinity, the Buddha is never regarded as a final authority on any theory or doctrine. Nor is he regarded as a Creator of the animate

and inanimate worlds. He is simply seen as a guide to the states of liberation and omniscience.

In another sutra Buddha advised his followers never to accept any of his teachings merely out of respect for him, but to first analyze and investigate them as intensely as a goldsmith scrutinizes a piece of gold that he is considering purchasing. We should accept a teaching only after being convinced of its validity and applicability through our own reason and experience. This shows that Buddha wanted his followers to take a scientific approach toward his doctrine.

In the above quotation the Buddha compares himself with a medical doctor, whose duty is to diagnose and prescribe the proper medicine to his patients. Respon-

*Continued on page 2*



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## EDITORIAL

We would like to thank all of you who have so generously supported the *Eclectic Theosophist*; some of you even paying several years ahead. In the Winter 1993 *Eclectic* we said that we would be changing the name of the *Eclectic* to *The Path—Light for the Mind, Love for the Heart and Understanding for the Intellect*. We invite your contributions, articles, essays, fiction, poetry and comments to help bring this into manifestation, and look forward to some lively interaction. For this new inception of a broader Theosophical effort our focus will be to move from within more exclusively Theosophically organized circles to the dynamic of Theosophical ideas now so permeating the world culture. *The Path* will remain committed to Theosophical ideas whether labeled as such or not, for it is the power of the ideas in our spiritual life that is of real consequence. The first issue of *The Path* will be available this January 1996. (A special issue of the most significant articles of the *Eclectic* from its beginning in 1971, will be published in November 1995.)

### Note to Subscribers:

Due to increased cost of printing and postage, the new quarterly subscription rate is:

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continued from front page

sibility for taking the medicines lies with the patient himself; to be relieved from the sickness depends on how well one follows the doctor's advice. Like that, we do not achieve liberation and enlightenment simply by blindly believing in the *Dharma*; we have to implement the teachings correctly.

It is also useful to have living examples of successful practitioners when we embark upon the task of traversing the spiritual path ourselves. Thus, there is a need of the *Sangha*, the Spiritual Community.

This is how the *Triratna*, the Buddhist Trinity of *Buddha*, *Dharma* and *Sangha*, is explained.

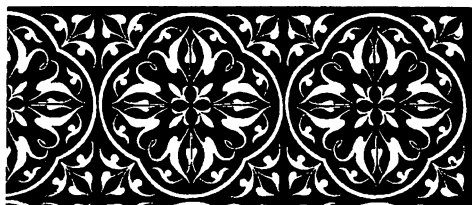
It may be useful to consider the similarities and/or the inter-applicability of the qualities attributed to Buddha in the Buddhist scriptures with those of God in theistic faiths, and to look at how the Buddhist view reflects upon the practitioner's commitment to social action and his or her appreciation of the ideal of justice.

The principal quality of the Buddhas as teachers of sentient beings in the quest to achieve liberation from cyclic existence and miserable states are of three categories: (1) infinite wisdom; (2) immeasurable compassion; and (3) peerless strength.

We shall discuss the first two of these together, as this seems to be more practical.

#### THE CONCEPTS OF OMNISCIENCE AND OMNIPRESENCE

In all Buddhist scriptures of the three *yanas* " *Sravakayana*, *Bodhisattvayana*, and *Mantrayana* " omniscience is attributed to the buddhas as one of the main qualifications to be teachers of the world. However, within the different tenet systems there seems to be slightly differing interpretations of the explanation of the term "all knowing."



The *abhidharma* texts seem to suggest that wherever a buddha applies his mind, the object appears as clearly as a sensory phenomenon lying directly in front of him. This mental power fulfills a requirement of a guide and master teacher.

Acharya Dharmakirti in his *Treatise on Pramana*, in discussing his definition of the validity of a buddha, wrote the following lines;

"Whoever sees the nature of what is to be followed and what is to be avoided, along with their methods, he is to be regarded as valid. Whether he sees things at far distances or not is irrelevant; rather, they who see the objects of aspiration (of seekers) are the competent masters. If seeing things at a far distance makes one a valid teacher, then we should take a vulture as our spiritual guide."

Dharmakirti also wrote, "He may or may not know the number of insects under the earth. But this matter is irrelevant to our needs."

In the *Madhyamaka* literature, seeing the two truths simultaneously and directly is described as a special quality of the buddhas. It is said that while traversing the *bodhisattva bhūmis*, one alternates between directly seeing the two levels of reality, conventional and ultimate: in the meditational state, only the ultimate truth is perceived directly; during the intervals between meditation, only conventional truth is seen directly.

Generally speaking, most of the later Indian Buddhist philosophers tend to assert that a buddha sees every knowable thing. That is to say, he sees all things without obstacles or barriers of time and space. This theory is supported by the reason that a buddha has removed all the obstacles of knowledge through immeasurable efforts and accumulation of merits in countless aeons.

The second quality, or that of great compassion, is one of the main factors in the production of buddha's attainment. As stated in Chandrakirti's *A Guide to the Middle View*, compassion is important in the beginning, in the

middle, and in the end. Here compassion is likened in the beginning to a seed, in the middle to the nurturing of the seed through the stages of its growth, and in the end to the final ripening of the crop. This process is a metaphor for how firstly compassion inspires one to enter the enlightenment path; then secondly it safeguards adherents from falling into the pitfalls of the self-peace state in the middle of the path; and finally it is due to compassion that a buddha constantly engages in the activities that produce the happiness and enlightenment of the sentient beings, after he has achieved the completion of his own training.

Except in the case of a few *tantric* commentaries, not much Buddhist literature attributes omnipresence to the Buddha. The idea of the omnipresence of the buddhas is based on the *tantric* doctrine of the subtle body and the subtle mind as being inseparable entities. The implication is that since a buddha's mind is "all knowing" and reaches to all existing objects, it therefore is inevitable that his body also is all pervasive. A point into which research should be made is whether this theory of the buddhas as omnipresent is influenced by historical contacts with other (non-Buddhist) religious traditions.

#### THE CONCEPT OF OMNIPOTENCE

When we discuss the concept of omnipotence, the controversial concept of a supramundane creator of this world is inevitably involved. It is also appropriate to analyze this point along with the third quality of a buddha, namely, his peerless strength or energy.

Here ten strengths are attributed to the buddhas. These strengths are as follows:

1. the strength of knowledge of what is possible and impossible;
2. the strength of knowledge of the karmic consequences of actions;
3. the strength of knowledge of the differing karmic predispositions;

4. that of the different elements;
5. that of the higher and lower mental capacities of sentient beings;
6. that of the progress that leads everywhere;
7. that of everything concerning the origin of all misery, and that leads to equanimity, mystic meditations, complete emancipation, and *dhyana*;
8. that of remembering former rebirths;
9. that of birth and death; and
10. that of the destruction of the afflictions.

The word omnipotent connotes being able to do anything one wishes. None of the above-mentioned strengths suggest that a buddha is able to do everything he would like to do. Dialectical arguments may also be implemented here to point out that if a buddha were to have such a power, then he would already have delivered all the sentient beings to the state of *nirvana*, and there would be no misery in the world. It is thus clear that there is no place in Buddhism for omnipotence in this sense.

### THE CREATOR THEORY

The previous assertions do not imply that the world comes into being without any prime factor.

A verse from *A Guide to the Middle View* of Acharya Chandrakirti is relevant here,

The mind itself creates the various animate and inanimate worlds.

All the living beings are produced by karma,

And without mind there can be no karma.

*Karma*, or action, can be categorized into two principal groups: the karma created by motivation and thought; and the karma created by motivated deeds.

Here again we should not forget that for Buddhists the main question

with the concept of a Creator centers around the problem of why individual sentient beings remain in suffering cyclic existence, and why they are delivered to the state of cessation of suffering.

The focal point in Buddhism is that the tamed and untamed mind respectively brings about happiness and misery. Thus the mind which is made harmonious by the acquisition of positive qualities is the basis of not only the ultimate and highest goal (i.e., *nirvana* or buddhahood), but also it is the basis of our day-to-day happiness.

### THE BUDDHIST DISCIPLINES

The Buddha prescribed the disciplines of ten negative karmic actions from which we should refrain.

Three of these are of the body: (1) killing; (2) taking what is not ours; and (3) sexual misconduct. Four are related to speech: (1) speaking untruthfully; (2) speaking slanderously; (3) using harsh and abusive language; and (4) talking meaningless talk. Finally, three are related to the mind: (1) allowing thoughts of greed; (2) allowing thoughts of creating harm to others; and (3) holding to mistaken opinions and beliefs.

Beside these informal disciplines there are numerous formal precepts of restraint. These are placed in three categories: the *pratimoksha* disciplines (Hinayana); the *bodhisattva* disciplines (Mahayana); and the *tantric* disciplines (Vajrayana). Here the essence of the first of these is to avoid harming others; the essence of the second is to avoid the thought of self-interest; and the essence of the third is to cut off ordinary perception of the world. The main effort in the *pratimoksha* disciplines is to control the body and speech against fallacious actions. On the other hand, the *bodhisattva* and *tantric* disciplines are mainly concerned with controlling the mind from fallacious activity. In the Tibetan tradition all three are practiced in union. Here it is said that the *pratimoksha* disciplines deal with controlling gross external faults as a means of paving the way

for the *bodhisattva* and *tantric* disciplines, that control the subtle inner faults. Anyone interested in accomplishing the path to enlightenment in one lifetime should take one form of *pratimoksha* ordination in accordance with his or her personal capacity, and make this the basis for the higher trainings of the *bodhisattva* and *mantra* paths.

### THE BODHISATTVA WAY

Without bothering to go into the various precepts of the *bodhisattva* path, we shall briefly survey the ideas behind and activities of such a being.

A person who is eligible to be called a *bodhisattva* is one who has generated a determined aspiration to accomplish the state of buddhahood, not merely for his or her own sake alone, but for the sake of all sentient beings.

All the activities of a *bodhisattva* are subsumed under the topic of the six perfections, or *paramitas*. Each of these *paramitas* is presented in a threefold manner, as follows.

The first of the six is the perfection of generosity. Its three aspects are as follows: (a) giving spiritual teaching or imparting any useful knowledge is generosity in terms of *Dharma*; (b) giving any material things, ranging from food and water to household items and so forth, and even limbs of one's own body, is generosity in terms of material; and (c) giving protection to those who are threatened by any kind of fear is generosity in terms of protection.

Next is the perfection of ethics. Here, (a) learning and following the *bodhisattva* path is the ethics of accumulating merits; (b) to carefully maintain the precepts one has taken is the ethics of safeguarding against non-virtuous forces; and (c) to serve all sentient beings without discrimination is the ethics of serving others.

Thirdly is the perfection of tolerance: (a) being tolerant in one's practice so as to bear difficulties that one encounters while engaged in spiritual application, such as hunger, thirst, unfavorable weather, and so forth, is





tolerance against hardship; (b) to check anger towards those who cause various harms to oneself is tolerance against intentional harm; and (c) to be able to appreciate the profound teachings such as emptiness (*shunyata*) and selflessness (*anatma*), and not to be shocked by them, is the tolerance of understanding.

Then follows the perfection of effort: (a) to keep the inner resolve of achieving buddhahood for the sake of all sentient beings is the effort that is like armor; (b) never to relent in the activities of learning, contemplation and meditation is the effort of accumulation of merit; and (c) skillfully guiding living beings in the ways of goodness is the effort of working for the sentient beings.

Fifthly there is the perfection of concentration: (a) engaging in various

states of worldly absorption is concentration leading to happiness in the present life; engaging in various concentrations leading to the achievement of the higher qualities of a buddha is concentration for high quality; and (c) engaging in various activities for the well-being of sentient beings by means of the six clairvoyances is the concentration of working for the sentient beings.

Finally there is the perfection of wisdom: (a) to be well-versed in scriptures dealing with the spiritual path is the wisdom of knowing the means of one's own well-being; (b) to be well-versed in the sciences of healing, arts and crafts, and so forth, is the wisdom of knowing the means of other's well-being; and (c) to be well-versed in the knowledge of logic, grammar, and so forth, is the wisdom of knowing the

means of subduing the opposing forces.

There is no doubt that if the ideals upon which these six perfections are based are honored, and if the ways of behavior that they advocate should prevail in society, then the creation of a just social order is guaranteed. A society consists of its members, and a just society is possible only when its individual people learn to live a just life.

Conventional laws and regulations may best be described as attempts for bringing about justice in a society. However, the ultimate factor in establishing a just society is the mind which brings about justice and injustice. And this depends upon whether an individual's mind is tamed or untamed, upon whether it is spiritually mature or still spiritually immature.



## GNOSTIC AND MYSTICAL THEOSOPHY

W. R. Laudahn, whose articles have been published in theosophical magazines, sent us a copy of the above-named book in December 1994. He passed away in February 1995, in his home in Ojai, California. About the content of this book, he wrote us; "It's about Theosophia in its purity, shorn of High and Low Occultism, White and Black Magic, and even Ethics and generalities" left standing is a beating mystical heart, invigorating the blood in which all else flows from the infinite Center." He further says:

"Astrologers, Occultists, Psychics, Psychologists, and Scientists, it is said 'explain the world, whereas Mystics explain it away,' before it goes away. The main mystical attraction is the One great, permanent Attractor. It is a boundless inwardness that makes possible the mystic goal of Unity with Deity and Salvation for the Self. The many lesser, temporary attractions arrive and depart, live and die, wax and wane in the unreality of Maya, cosmic illusion. Reality is the single Self of All.

"This endeavor " a collection of published essays " is dedicated to the Free Search for Truth, wherever it may lead. As the beam from the Light is wide, this spotlight is on full Mysticism and positive Gnosticism, where attempts are made to know the otherwise Unknowable. Others remain perfectly free to focus on Ethics, the Occult, and on and on.

"The vast majority in Spirituality are naturally drawn to forms of Psychism and the Occult, for better or for worse. I trust that the majority will tolerate a minority view. It is a challenge for all of us when we speak of Love and Brotherhood.

"This book was 'desk-top' published, as it is not likely that a Publisher would touch it. After all, there is no sex and violence to excite the senses and emotions. There is only 'food for thought' for those few so inclined. Such is life. However, this is not Elitism, for 'many are called...'"



## APPRECIATION " OLIVE DUTTA "

Jean Coulsting

Olive Dutta died on 23 June 1994, after a short illness. She was a dedicated student of *The Secret Doctrine* and *The Mahatma Letters* and, with Adam Warcup, had produced a study course on the latter. She had held office at Lodge and Federation level; had served on the Study and Training Committee; worked in the Inquiry Room at Headquarters; was a Trustee of Blavatsky Trust and had given valuable service at Tekels Park Guest House. Olive also gave lectures on Theosophy, and led many study classes. She particularly liked taking beginners, and there must be many who have cause to be grateful to Olive for setting their feet on the path of understanding Theosophy and thereby Life. What greater epitaph could there be.

## AMMONIUS SACCAS AND HIS "ECLECTIC PHILOSOPHY"

By Jean-Louis Simons, 1994

Foreward from *Theosophical History: Occasional Papers III*, John Santucci, Editor.

It is noteworthy that one of the clearest and oft-quoted explanations of Theosophy is found in H.P. Blavatsky's *The Key to Theosophy*. What is overlooked, however, is that the discussion found in the first twelve pages of *The Key* is derived from a pamphlet written by a noted Platonist of his day, Dr. Alexander Wilder. This pamphlet, identified simply as *Eclectic Philosophy* on page 2 and 3, was originally published in 1869 under the daunting title *New Platonism and Alchemy: A Sketch of the Doctrines and Principal Teachers of the Eclectic or Alexandrian School; also An Outline of the Interior Doctrines of the Alchemists of the Middle Ages*. It was this brief work of some 30 pages that provided Madame Blavatsky with the necessary information on Ammonius Saccas and his disciples, the Eclectic Theosophical School, the Alexandrian philosophers or Philaletheians, the Mystery Schools, and the Essenes of Judaea and Carmel mentioned in the opening pages of *The Key*. Described by Colonel Henry S. Olcott as a "tall, lank man of the Lincoln type, with a noble, dome-like head, thin jaws, grey hair, and language filled with quaint Saxon Americanisms," and whose "head [was] full of knowledge [but] not a college-bred or city-bred man," Wilder was capable of expounding on

a wide variety of topics such as "the migration of races and symbols, the esoteric meaning of Greek philosophy, the value of Hebrew of Greek texts, or the merits and demerits of various schools of medicine...." Although Colonel Olcott knew Dr. Wilder from before the Civil War (1860-65), it was in the autumn of 1876 that he was introduced to Madame Blavatsky. Both were attracted intellectually to one another judging from Olcott's description of his conversing "by the hour with H.P.B., often lying recumbent on the sofa, with " as she used to say "one long leg resting on the chandelier, the other on the mantel-piece". The mutual attraction of their ideas led Dr. Wilder to become an Active Fellow in the Theosophical Society. Sponsored by both Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, he was formally admitted into the Society at the October 4, 1876 meeting of the T.S. Wilder's worth was soon apparent in his contribution to H.P.B.'s *Isis Unveiled*. It was he who recommended the manuscript to the publisher J.W. Bouton for publication. Wilder's contribution included the writing of much of the introductory portion of the work, entitled "Before the Veil," indexing the text, and correcting the Greek, Latin and Hebrew words. Dr. Wilder states in his own words:

It was truly a ponderous document and displayed research in a very extended field, requiring diligence, familiarity with the various topics, as well as a purpose to be fair to the writer. Regarding myself as morally obligated to act for the advantage of

Mr. Bouton, I showed no favor beyond what I believed justice to demand. I regarded it a duty to be served.

...[Mr. Bouton] placed the manuscript again in my hands, with instructions to shorten it as much as it would bear. This was a discretionary power that was far from agreeable... While abridging the work, I endeavored in every instance to preserve the thought of the author in plain language, removing only such terms and matters as might be regarded as superfluous, and not necessary to the main purpose.

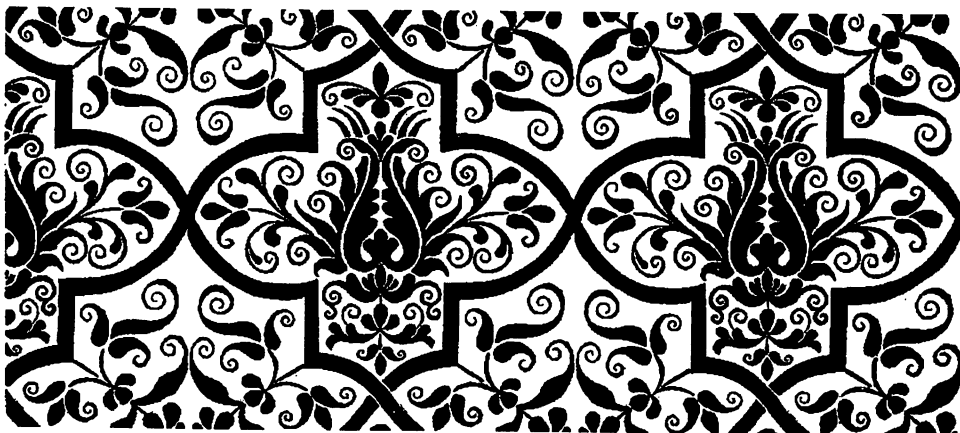
...In this instance...I had aimed only to shorten without marring the work... I would hesitate, likewise, to be considered in any noteworthy sense as an editor of the work. It is true that after Mr. Bouton had agreed to become the publisher, I was asked to read the proofsheets and make sure that the Hebrew words and terms belonging to other languages were correctly given by the printer, but I added nothing, and do not remember that ventured to control anything that was contributed to the work... .

...When the printer had placed everything in type, I was employed to prepare the index.

Both Dr. Wilder and Madame Blavatsky agreed to the role that Dr. Wilder played in the production of *Isis Unveiled* except for his failure to mention "Before the Veil." Without any available evidence, I hesitate to give a reason for this omission.

Perhaps as a reward for his work on the *Isis*, Colonel Olcott appointed Wilder a Vice-President (along with Dr. John A. Weisse) in his Foreign Order No.1, dated January 17, 1879. Whether he was in this office prior to this date is difficult to determine since records are unclear. We know, however, that in a letter published in *H.P.B. Speaks* there is mentioned that he was to be elected before H.P.B.'s and Olcott's departure for England and India on December 18, 1878.

Wilder was not to remain in office for very long. In a letter addressed to the President *ad interim* Major General





Abner Doubleday, dated November 26, 1879, he wrote that he could not "retain it consistently or benefit (*sic*) to the Society itself, which requires a more efficient and capable officer." The note, as abrupt as it is, is understandable since he served as Secretary of the National Eclectic Medical Association from 1876 to 1895, editing and contributing many articles in its "Transactions" during those years, as well as retaining the position of Professor of Psychology in the United States Medical College from 1878 to 1883. Still, he remained in the Society and served on the General Council throughout the 1880s, which indicates his position within the Society at the time of the publication of *The Key to Theosophy* in 1889.

Why Dr. Wilder chose as his source the prominent Lutheran theologian and church historian Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1694-1755) as his source for Ammonius Saccas and his disciples one may never know. True, Mosheim, unlike those before him, did not view the Church as a Mystical Body but rather as a secular institution that was open to historical investigation according to positivistic principles. Thus his *chef-d'oeuvre*, the *Institutiones historiae ecclesiasticae*, is primarily a descriptive narrative "based on the sources available to him" of Church history more as a textbook rather than an interpretive tome. Nonetheless, he was a devoted Lutheran Christian who served as Professor of Theology in Helmstedt, who helped found the University of Gottingen in 1747, and who served as its Chancellor from that date on.

In brief, Mosheim, Wilder, and the *Edinburgh Encyclopaedia* of 1830 "the latter mentioned in *The Key to Theosophy* on pages 5 and 7" are the sources for the opening pages of *The Key*, the same pages from which Dr. Siemons takes his cue for the present study. It is a wonder that there exists no previous work known to me that has examined this critical section of *The Key* and the place of these three sources therein. After all, it is the most ac-

cessible book to Theosophists and non-Theosophists alike regarding the place of the Modern Theosophical Movement within the broad scope of theosophical history, thus giving it an importance that few other Theosophical books share. Thus the importance of this present study, which helps to place the opening section of *The Key* in an intellectual historical context. For this Dr. Siemons is to be congratulated.

Dr. Jean-Louis Siemons is well qualified to undertake a study of this sort. Besides engaging in a scientific career as a Professor of Biophysics at the Institut National Agronomique, Paris, he has devoted a lifetime of study and research in the philosophies and mysticisms of both East and West. Dr. Siemons became an Associate of the United Lodge of Theosophists nearly 50 years ago and has undertaken the translation of the fundamental texts of Theosophical literature. He is also a writer of several well-known books on reincarnation, death and *post mortem* states, including *La Reincarnation*, (Paris: Editions Retz, 1981. Reedition, 1982), *Revivre nos vies anterieures* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1984. Reedition, 1985), and *Mourir pour renaitre* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1987). In 1988 Dr. Siemons also contributed a valuable study on the origins of the term Theosophy, entitled *Theosophia in Neo-Platonic and Christian Literature (2nd to 6th Century A.D.)*, for the former *Theosophical History Centre* (London). He remains an active lecturer, both in France and other countries, devoting himself mainly to making the original doctrines of Theosophy better known, and to offering the general public a broader and more accurate view of what the modern Movement launched by Madame Blavatsky stands for.

The present work formed the subject-matter of a paper given by Dr. Siemons in London on the 15th of July 1988 at the Third Conference of the Theosophical History Centre at the Theosophical Society Headquarters, 50 Gloucester Place.



## When We Die... A Unique, Authentic Account

Geoffrey A. Farthing  
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## FOREWORD

Glenn D. Paige  
Professor Emeritus of  
Political Science  
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To Lama Doboom Tulku, *The Buddhist Path to Enlightenment: Tibetan Buddhist Philosophy and Practice*, (Point Loma, 1995).

These words are written with profound gratitude to Lama Doboom Tulku for the compassionate gift of knowledge and wisdom that is humbly offered to fortunate readers of this book. Among them can be expected not only scholars in Buddhist and Tibetan studies, but also students of comparative religion, humanists of all disciplines, and general readers "including followers of every faith" who seek to understand the source of the remarkable commitment by Tibetans led by His Holiness the Dalai Lama to nonviolent liberation from suffering for themselves and for all mankind.

As one who is not a specialist in Buddhist philosophy or Tibetan studies, but as a political scientist seeking to understand human capacity to realize a nonkilling global society, I deeply appreciate Lama Doboom Tulku's skillful guidance into matter ranging from simple to extremely complex. Great care has been taken in translating Tibetan and Sanskrit Buddhist terms and texts into English. This facilitates insights that prove the wisdom of the author's conviction that "correct translations will always result in great waves of benefit."

The overall theme of the book is clear: "To be of benefit to the world, we have to first put ourselves in order." Buddhism and other religions offer ways to do so. There is no claim to exclusivity: "We who are followers of a specific tradition should not be so proud that we praise our own religion and its founders as being better and purer than those of other traditions. Rather, we should put into practice whatever useful advice we receive from our own tradition and, by trying to benefit ourselves and others, perform a useful service for today's problem-



filled world." He adds, "Our differences add to the rich tapestry of human thought rather than create clashes in patterns of it."

The spirit of reasoned exploration of alternatives is expressed in Lama Doboom Tulku's discussion of various aspects of the Buddhist tradition. For example, we are invited to understand similarities, differences and complementarities among the *Hinayana* (*Sutrayana*), *Mahayana* (*Bodhisattvayana*), and *Vajrayana* (*Mantrayana*) teachings. We are introduced to five meanings of the term *nirvana*; twelve, nine and three categories of Buddhist literature; alternative teachings on the existence of a "soul" and reincarnation; the meaning of *mandala* symbols; and too many other topics. Detailed descriptions of meditation, the bath ritual, and ordination ceremonies, help to understand precepts in practice. We are reminded that to pay homage to the Three Jewels (*Buddha*, *Dharma*, *Sangha*) means not just to respect external objects: "By relying on these outer precious gems, we acquire them as inner qualities."

Beginning with the introduction, making discoveries chapter-by-chapter, several images of what was happening came to mind. The first is that of climbing a mountain by a circular path, sometimes arduous, sometimes easy, enjoying views from different perspectives, sometimes obscured by clouds, yet sensing progress toward the vast vista of the summit under the guidance of an expert mountain-climber. A second is being taught gross and subtle features of a multifaceted jewel by a master gemologist. A third is that the book constitutes a kind of *mandala* into which the author-guide invites the reader to enter and explore. Or that the book constitutes a kind of "vehicle" carrying the reader between languages, cultures, teachings, and practices. Finally there is simply the image of teacher and student engaged in reasoned, if silent,

sometimes humorous, dialogue of minds in quest of liberating truth.

Since the greatest joy of a teacher is for students who can carry on and go beyond "and since that of a student is for teachers who can guide with wisdom and compassion" this book brings us the combined joy of the author's late guru Kensur Yeshey Tubton, and our own joy of benefitting from Lama Doboom Tulku's wise and compassionate instruction. In this book we find no "footsteps of the jackal," but only the enlightening integrity of a master teacher-contributor to a nonviolent world.

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## A PRACTICAL NUCLEUS OF A UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD

H.P.B. in "What Good Has Theosophy Done in India?": *Lucifer*, April 1888

There is but ONE Eternal Truth, one universal, infinite and changeless Spirit of Love, Truth and Wisdom, impersonal, therefore bearing a different name with every nation, one Light for all, in which the whole Humanity lives and moves, and has its being. Like the spectrum in optics, giving multi-colored and various rays, which are caused by one and the same sun, so theologies and sacerdotal systems are many. But the Universal religion *can only be one*, if we accept the real, primitive meaning of the root of that word. We theosophists, so accept it; and therefore say, "We are all brothers" by the laws of Nature, of birth, and death, as also by the laws of our utter helplessness from birth to death in this world of sorrow and deceptive illusions. Let us, then, love, help and mutually defend each other against this spirit of deception; and while holding to that which each of us accepts as his ideal of truth and reality "i.e., to the religion which suits each of us best" let us unite ourselves to form a practical nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity WITHOUT DISTINCTION OF RACE, CREED, OR COLOR."



## THE RELEVANCE OF GANDHI'S PRINCIPLES

*Theosophy (U.L.T.), February 1995*

Students of Theosophy often search for evidence of theosophical principles in social, economic, political and philosophical developments. When this is done, the life work of Mohandas K. Gandhi glows with a fire that remains undiminished across the last 50 years. The Gandhian movement is continuously fueled by the needs of the starving, abused and dispossessed, by the violent conflicts among religious faiths, and the ever-growing desire and newly realized possibilities for freedom, justice and opportunities.

The principles Gandhi searched for, found and then enacted are clearly those we presently call Theosophical. He never considered himself a Theosophist, yet diligently studied the guides to action offered by the *Bhagavad Gita*. Gandhi also found great value in the "sermon on the mount" in the New Testament. These he demonstrated dramatically and persistently in a variety of effective methods to awaken the Indian people and challenge the conscience of the British.

### PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTIONS

In *Gandhi Marg*, journal of the Gandhi Peace Foundation, January-March, 1994, an article by S.N. Patil examines the "Framework of Gandhi's Contemporary Relevance," which one discovers, also reveals the relevance of Theosophy on a *practical*, as well as on a metaphysical, level. Mr Patil presents five assumptions that form the basis for Gandhi's solutions to social problems. They are assumptions from which Gandhi developed practical interpretations of the basic propositions of Theosophy. Thus his relevance today, both philosophically and practically in his methods and means, cannot be disputed. Patil writes:

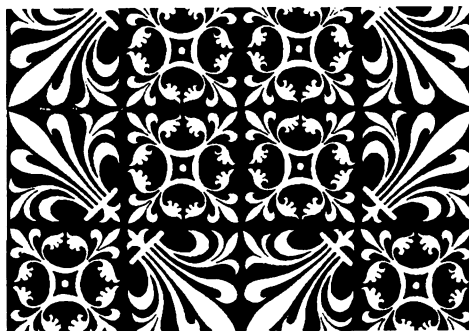
The first assumption relates to God. Gandhi believed in one God. Different religions are only different ways of realizing God. The second assumption relates to human nature...a mix-

ture of good and bad. Man must make constant efforts to develop good qualities and to remove bad qualities. The third assumption relates to...the process of evolution towards absolute truth. Those who want to practice truth...must lead a simple and regulated life. The fourth assumption is concerned with self-rule or *Swaraj* which is applicable to an individual and a nation. Individual *Swaraj* means control over oneself for rule over oneself. National *Swaraj* means national freedom and exercise of such freedom with restraint. The fifth assumption deals with ends and means. Gandhi maintained that both ends and means must justify the ends.

### DEITY THAT UNIFIES

The first assumption, the concept of one deific principle, obviously serves as a means of dispelling the hatred and violent conflicts between religious faiths. They persist in all areas of the world today: between Hindus and Muslims in India, Muslims and Serbs in Bosnia, Sunnis and Shiite Muslims in Iraq, Protestants and Catholics in Ireland, Christians and Muslims in the Philippines, Orthodox Jews and Muslims in the Middle East, and in less overt conflicts between Evangelicals and Fundamentalists and other religious sects in the United States.

Gandhi taught that religious terms (for example, those for Deity " God, Jehovah, Allah, Brahm, Tao ") and various doctrines are only different means to realize God. But God is one, unifying humanity and residing as a divine spark in every being. Therefore, development of an attitude of charity and tolerance toward each other is the measure needed.



### CONCERN FOR OTHERS

The means to change attitudes are made without violence, through education of individuals as common citizens, who understand and respect contrary beliefs and practices. Patil offers concrete examples:

Hindus should not play music when they pass through the Masjids in which the Muslims require solemn silence to offer prayers; Muslims would not slaughter a cow which is a sacred animal for the Hindus... . The need of the hour in India is to utilize the corporate energy of Hindus and Muslims for nation-building activities and to turn India into a real secular country... . Therefore Indian politics is not to be communalized but is to be spiritualized in a true Gandhian spirit.

In the United States similar offenses are being recognized. Adjustments have been worked out in respect for practices and observances of religious holidays in public schools. Ancient burial grounds of Native Americans are being recognized and, in some cases, set aside. In other instances skeletal remains may be carefully removed from the site and released to the care of the tribe.

Gandhi believed that the recognition of God in each person leads to a respect and concern for human dignity and to equality between genders, castes, ethnic groups and family members. The atrocities practiced today toward one another would not be permitted in a society of human beings who are seen as essentially divine. As Patil states, Gandhi, in *My Religion*, expressed his conviction, supported by The New Testament, that "the cohesive force in a social system is love."

### SWARAJ " SELF-RULE

In Gandhi's third and fourth assumptions may be discerned the bases for practical measures he established that encourage individuals and societies to evolve through self-rule. Through *Swaraj* one may create a simple and disciplined life, which Gandhi saw as necessary to cope with the problems

that beset youths, families and social economies. The self-restraints of *Swaraj* would enable youths to resist drugs, alcohol, promiscuous sex and gang violence. It would curtail the greedy and exploitative economic practices of many individuals and corporations, reducing the inequalities between rich and poor all over the globe. The principle of *Swaraj* and his basic assumptions of the individual's dignity and capacity for self-determination and self-reliance would guide villages in building just and productive rural economies throughout India.

### WISE MEANS " ETHICAL ENDS

To eliminate exploitation and to establish a matrix of "brotherhood" in the large-scale business practices, Gandhi designed a system of trusteeship. Respect for human dignity and capacities through cooperative and communal actions of urban, as well as rural, areas can be seen in several features described by Patil.

- Landlords and industrialists are not liquidated but are transformed into trustees of their land and factories for the benefit of their workers in particular and of the masses in general; owners

and workers become partners in the process of production.

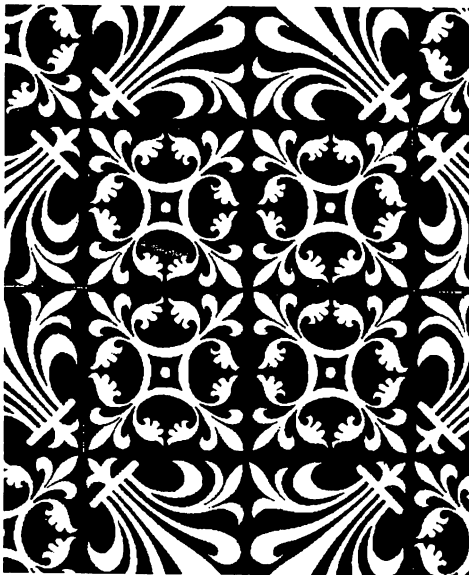
- Landlords and industrialists would use only a part of their profits for reasonable requirements and thereby avoid exploitation of workers and consumers.

- Under trusteeship economic power is diffused and decentralized among the various self-governing individuals.

Trusteeship has a moral base, and is an instrument to bring about socioeconomic equality without violence and ill-will.

### KARMA " JUSTICE BY WHATEVER NAME

The measure created by Gandhi to meet social, economic and educational problems of the Indian people were actions with moral dimensions that nourish the soul. Because his means reflected the ends he envisioned, they are



kind of Karma has an irreconcilable quarrel with Freewill. But this is not the kind of Karma envisaged by the seer quoted above. For him every act and thought is a seed, which, beginning as a scarce visible speck, may spread to who knows what umbrageousness. Or it is a vibration which thrills forth into all immensities of time and space. Nor is the seer concerned as to whether or not the energy recoils on the original starter; nay, he would seem rather to be the more concerned that it may fall on somebody else. We

enactments of the fifth assumption " "means must justify ends" " stated by S.N. Patil. Theosophists may discern in the practice of *Swaraj*, of non-violence, and other carefully planned measures, an unspoken understanding by Gandhi of the law of Karma. Its practical implications as a means of affecting changes and reforms within ourselves and in society may be drawn from two aphorisms, stated by Mr. Judge: "The Karma of this earth is the combination of the acts and thoughts of all beings of every grade...its action may be known by calculation from cause to effect; and this calculation is possible because the effect is wrapped up in and is not succedent to the cause." (*Judge Articles*, I, 121.)

As Theosophy teaches, and Gandhi effectively demonstrated, responsibility for the difficulties we face lie within the individual, who is the causal agent. The power to modify and eliminate problems is within ourselves. Thus, Gandhi's creative and compassionate thinking remains relevant to contemporary circumstances, now and in the future. It stands as a dynamic expression of the Wisdom Religion in human endeavors.

### CARLYLE ON KARMA

Henry T. Edge

*The Beginning holds in it the  
End, and all that leads  
thereto; as the acorn does the  
oak and its fortunes...There  
thou canst begin; the  
Beginning is for thee; but  
where, and of  
what sort, and for whom will  
the end be?*

" CARLYLE, *French Revolution*, III, 2

If you stand up a row of dominoes and push the end one, each one strikes the next until the whole row lies flat. That is one idea of Karma, and this

know that in the long run our deeds recoil on the doer; but do we give sufficient thought to their effect on others? No doubt matters will in the long run be squared up for these others, but does that quiet our conscience or free us from responsibility? Read further in the same place:

The word that is spoken, as we know, flies irrevocable: not less, but more, the action that is done. 'The gods themselves,' sings Pindar, 'cannot annihilate the action that is done.' No: this, once done, is always done; cast forth into endless Time; and, long conspicuous or soon hidden, must verily work and grow forever there, an indestructible new element in the Infinite of Things. Or, indeed, what is this Infinite of Things itself, which men name Universe, but an Action, a sum-total of Actions and Activities? The living



ready-made sum-total of these three, "which Calculation cannot add, cannot bring on its tablets; yet the sum, we say, is written visible: All that has been done, All that is doing, All that will be done! Understand it well, the Thing thou beholdest, that Thing is an Action, the product and expression of exerted Force: All of Things is an infinite conjugation of the verb *To do*.

"An indestructible element"; man then is creator, one of the *architectones* of the universe; as traditional Wisdom assures us he is "by heritage. Great is his responsibility, great his power" for good, for ill. He can create little universes, sand-built; until they are swept away by the Laws of Nature or the Will of God "names for the working of others and better *architectones*, higher in the scale than mere man, nearer the throne of the Real, the True.

The universe "an Action, a sum of

Actions." And Karma, we say, means Action. Well, the Universe is doubtless Spirit energizing Matter, and Matter ensouled by Spirit and providing vehicles for Spirit's manifestation. But are we not also told that the communion of Spirit and Matter generates Action? Or is the idea changed if we choose to say Fohat or Cosmic Vitality? Technical terms are necessary, but, like other coinage or fiscal paper, liable to depreciation; so it refreshes the mind to have our cherished ideas expressed in other language. Man, in this case, is Action and a sum of Actions. No doubt some higher stereoscopic vision could present to our illumined eye man as a whole; but for the present we have to view him in sections ("aspects"). So he is now a string of Principles and anon a many-clothed Monad; give him another turn and we may see him as a bundle of actions. When anything

ceases to act, it ceases to be.

"The sum, we say, is written visible." In the Astral Light? By the Lipikas, the Recording Angel? To each his word; the idea remains. We proclaim our doctrine of the divinity of man, but it is hard to shake off our leading-strings, to stop wondering what outside powers are going to do to us, whether of Saturn in the tenth or of a Karma that, like God, "moves in a mysterious way its wonders to perform." We fear the loss of our free will and do not know what to do with what we've got.

It is a relief to hear our cherished beliefs from the mouth of a great thinker unfettered by formulas and whether overshadowed and inspired by some august and invisible Presence or simply from his own Higher Self.

*The Theosophical Forum,*  
August 1945



## THE SUMMIT VEILED IN CLOUDS

*By Jan Molijn*

The Eclectic Theosophist, March 15, 1975

We are daily surrounded by miracles, but life is so variegated and we are always so busy that usually we have no time to appreciate them. What are these miracles? Well, just the opening of a flower, or the growth of a baby, or, to make a celestial leap, the grand procession of brilliant starry orbs through the night skies. These are true miracles, are they not? For what do we actually know about the secret life of the flower, of the babe, of the star? What do we know of the origin and destiny of solar systems and constellations? And where did we ourselves "begin" in the eternal past, or what will be our destiny in the eternal future? And since these matters concern only the visible universe, we may proceed by wondering about the invisible cosmos and invisible man.

Our minds boggle at the idea of having to solve these mysteries.

Nevertheless, we are all somewhat familiar with our own non-physical activities, which include thinking, willing, feeling and intuiting. That these embrace a vast field was known to many cultured peoples. The Greeks and Romans knew several aspects, from which we have borrowed such terms as *pneuma*, *bios*, *soma* and *corpus*. The Egyptians even recognized nine principles, the Brahmins seven, who gave them the Sanskrit names which are still frequently used in Theosophical literature, such as *atman*, *manas* and *kama*.

The series of seven is occasionally subdivided into a higher duad, an intermediate duad, and a lower triad, to illustrate the Pauline principles of spirit, soul, and body, in that order. It is also possible to symbolize man's seven principles by a triangle and a square, the triangle being called immortal, the square mortal, relatively speaking, of course. This diagram may serve the purpose of illustrating the processes of death and rebirth, because at the end of an incarnation the higher principles start on their planetary

circumambulations, while the lower principles follow their course through the terrestrial and astral realms of this Earth, to meet again at the next rebirth.

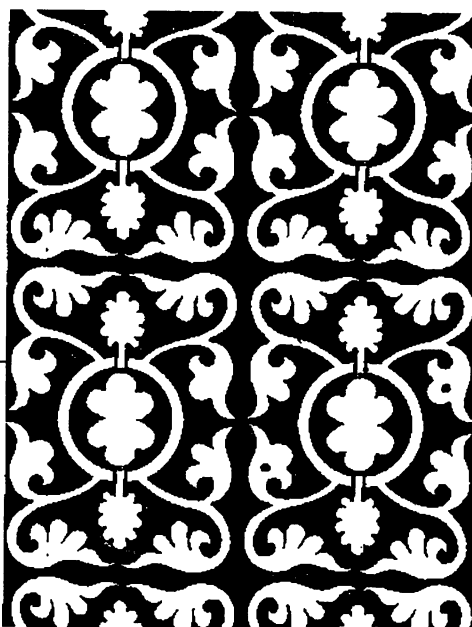
That the ideas mentioned above are by no means common knowledge became abundantly clear the other day when a newspaper, in an article combating abortion, wrote: "It is characteristic of new life that it has not asked for life. Wanted or not, man is born, of parents that he has not chosen, in a world which he has not shaped." As against this materialistic view Theosophy teaches that every birth is the result of causes generated by ourselves and that nothing happens accidentally. Sooner or later everyone reaps what he or she has sown. This is the well-known doctrine of karma. It results from two forces: first the cosmic evolutionary impulse, which leads all creatures from darkness into light, via all the intermediary stages of being, from atoms to gods, during which pilgrimage self-consciousness and experience are obtained. The second force is generated by our own voluntary reactions to all that we have lived

through on Earth, both pain and bliss. So to a considerable extent we are the architects of our own fortunes. But, we might well ask, what are these fortunes? They may be sorrow and pain, which bring their own need of discipline and experience; or relative happiness, which for some consists in pleasure, power and property, or for others in service to their fellow-men. This latter motive may even transcend ordinary desire in such a way that one sacrifices his own immediate spiritual advancement to help others, because he hears Compassion speak: "Can there be bliss when all that lives must suffer? Shalt thou be saved and hear the whole world cry?"

Theosophy teaches that such motives, and all spiritual impulses for that matter, originate "in stages" from the Summit of the hierarchy of adepts watching the progress of humanity. This Summit "to our physical senses

veiled in clouds " is sometimes referred to as the Silent Watcher, the Great Sacrifice, or the Wondrous Being. In the appalling situation mankind finds itself in at the moment, let us listen to the words of H.P. Blavatsky in *The Secret Doctrine* (I, 208), finding in them not only consolation, but an incentive to do whatever we can to bring the sublime ethics of the Ancient Wisdom to those of our fellow-men who can realize their grandeur:

"He is the 'Initiator,' called the 'GREAT SACRIFICE.' For, sitting at the threshold of LIGHT, he looks into



as rigidly as they do in the West. Lamaism is a tradition that is both political and spiritual in character. Tibet has been governed by monks for many centuries and the concept of the priest-king, once prevalent in China, was adopted in Tibet: the Dalai Lama has long been both worshipped and revered.

Exiled by the communists to northern India, the present Dalai Lama continues to command respect from his people and from many others who profess sympathy for the Buddhist way of life. Until the last few years doctors in Tibet were all monks. The Institute of Tibetan Medicine and Astrology (note the link between the two sciences) was, and still is, monastic and even now Tibetan doctors have to be well-schooled in *tantric* Bud-

dhism. The training is long and wide-ranging, taking seven years of full-time study. Large sections of text have to be committed to memory and the doctor must be skilled in both reading and writing Tibetan. He must also be totally familiar with the herbs and minerals that are used in medicines and be able to identify and select the herbs in their wild state; the monks themselves traditionally picked, dried and prepared the ingredients to produce their own medicines.

A comprehensive study of food and diet developed a system of classification according to taste, potency and characteristics which follows closely in the *ayurvedic* tradition. The three-fold division of essential characteristics, in terms of action, nature and balance, is common to both systems. Neither the Sanskrit nor the Tibetan terms translate easily into English, but the classification into three *humours* (wind, bile and phlegm) is the one generally adopted. This division pervades all systems of Tibetan medicine.

## TIBETAN MEDICINE A SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY IN PRACTICE

Roger Worthington

Tibetan medicine has its origin in *tantric* Buddhism. Its roots go back thousands of years, although the main treatise on which more recent medical practice is built dates from the eighth century. Early Tibetan doctors acquired their training in India and there are, in consequence, many similarities between *Ayurveda* (herbalism from the yogic tradition) and the Tibetan medical system. For centuries, Tibetan culture changed little; it was largely immune from external influence by virtue of its extreme physical isolation and also by reason of a deliberate policy of non-integration and closed borders.

Some might argue that Tibetans act as custodians of a sacred tradition; others might suggest that they have shown themselves unadaptable and entrenched in a feudal structure. In a country such as Tibet the distinctions between sacred and secular do not hold



This subject was taught not long ago in the United Kingdom; as part of the foundation course several Tibetan doctors came to England, including the personal physician to the Dalai Lama. The writer of this article attended the course which offered an insight into the essential nature of Tibetan medicine "a complete system inasmuch as it takes into account the whole person" mind, body and spirit. Holistic medicine is in a sense being rediscovered in the West, but in the East it has never been lost, and there is much that can be learnt by western medical science which has for too long been dominated by mechanical, reductionist thinking.

Balance is the key to the whole philosophy; balance of the systems, balance of energies in each organ, and balance of chemistry at the cellular level. Such concepts are not of course unique to Tibet; China, India and Japan are examples of countries with similar philosophical concepts and a strong spiritual element. The particular quality of the Tibetan system lies in its undiluted nature. Foreign influences have prevailed in the past (notably the Chinese and Mongolian) but they were never sufficient to corrupt the independent character of the Tibetans. They were not afraid to defend their independence and it was only in 1959 that the country was completely overrun by the Chinese.

Tibetans classify disease in a number of ways. There are conditions which aggravate one or more of the humours (wind, bile and phlegm); some of these are superficial and some are deep-rooted. Some conditions are affected by weather and others are affected by "spirits," having their origin in the mind or in past lives. Each disease has different characteristics and will manifest in different ways according to the degree of penetration in the whole system and the relative weaknesses of the body. Some conditions are regarded as being beyond treatment and likely to result in death, in which case there may be little to offer by way of treatment.

Methods of diagnosis are as thorough as the systems which classify the complaint. Pulse reading is both an art and a science and occupies a whole year of training. Observation is used to examine the eyes, tongue and skin, and pressures are applied to the body to test the nervous system. Where the disorder is likely to be of internal origin urine analysis is performed and other body fluids and secretions may also be examined. Questioning of the patient is important and will reveal not only the immediate symptoms but also something of his history and possible hereditary links.

The Tibetan approach to healing is subtle and non-invasive; anything that penetrates the surface of the skin is regarded as invasive, which means that even acupuncture is used relatively little. This is perhaps surprising in view of the proximity of China and Tibet, but in terms of basic medical philosophy the Indian influence is far stronger. For largely historical reasons surgery is almost unheard of in Tibet. Nothing can be regarded as more detrimental to the balance of energies than for the body to be cut open. This attitude persists today, although some Tibetans who feel that they must have it, travel abroad for the purpose.

Another technique used which does penetrate the skin is blood-letting. Where there is an excess of heat in the body (often regarded as indicative of too much pride), and especially when the digestive "fire" is too intense, it can be beneficial to draw blood from the body. If the heat is reduced, toxins

are also drawn out and the balance of humours is restored. As the system is truly holistic, Tibetan practice does not accept the divisions which have come to dominate western medicine. Specialist consultants do not exist; the practice in Tibet is for one doctor to treat everything.

Tibetan medicine has a purity and simplicity which is quite distinctive. It requires an adequate supply of herbs, but little apparatus. The training may appear to be out of date, but there is much there for the western doctor to learn, if for no other reason than that the methods are both safe and effective. The knowledge of anatomy and physiology may be a long way behind modern medical science on account of the lack of surgical practice, and Tibetan doctors have not had the experience of physically observing the inner workings of the human being. However, the spiritual philosophy which is derived from the Buddhist *tantras* is undefiled and is enlightening to the modern analytical mind.

The pace of western scientific discovery is unlikely to slow down; what is lacking is a spiritual philosophy to direct it. It would seem a valuable concept for the old and new, eastern and western, medical systems to exist side by side; this would be truly complementary medicine. Tibetan physicians are now keen to travel and to see their medical system stand up to scientific examination. There is much benefit to be derived from a spread of knowledge which would allow this remarkable system of medicine to flourish outside its homeland.

Further information on this subject is available from the author c/o 50 Gloucester Place, W1H 3HJ, London, England (please send a self-addressed envelope). Roger Worthington is an osteopath and practitioner of natural medicine who is one of the few to be trained in the United Kingdom in the theory and practice of Tibetan medicine. He lectures widely on yoga and health and has just been appointed director of post-graduate training jointly for the Institute of Complementary Medicine and the Health Practitioners Association. *The Theosophical Journal*, July-August 1994



## AN UNFINISHED UNIVERSE

L. Gordon Plummer

No argument will be necessary to convince you that this universe is unfinished. From the mere fact that life continues to manifest itself in living things, we may know that the course of evolution is not yet run. Whatever our ideas may be as to the goal for humanity, we all agree that mankind has not as yet reached that goal. And in larger measure we see in the heavens above us stars in all stages of youth and senility, infant stars, and old stars; comets on the one hand, which, Ancient Wisdom tells us, are unborn suns and planets, and on the other hand, meteors and asteroids, evidently the remains of stars and planets that have passed away.

The effort, then, is not to argue the question, but rather to give you the picture of the Universe which the Ancient Wisdom, today called Theosophy, has painted for us. Far from being a mere fantasy of ideas, it is a picture of the thing as it really is, culled from the evidence furnished by those who *know* because they have the means to find out. The Masters of Wisdom about the development and use of the higher spiritual faculties innate in man, and by means of these awakened powers they have donned the winged cap and winged slippers and "walked the skies."

Imagine yourselves standing on a hilltop on a clear night, with the stars shining brightly, as it were beckoning you. Imagine that you could take wings and rise from this earth and wander at will among the celestial bodies. Imagine that you could transcend the spheres which encompass our small family, our solar system, and with light step spring upwards into space and wander from star to star, and study the celestial phenomena. You would encounter all sorts of interesting things. You would see old stars and young stars, stars so aged that their life is spent, stars so young that they can hardly yet be called stars "they are comets. You would see nebulae, vast

bodies of tenuous gases in the process of forming into celestial bodies. You would find meteors and shooting-stars, fragments of once living worlds. You would pass planets innumerable, and moons galore, worn-out shells of planets long since dead.

Imagine yourselves able to travel on and on without hindrance until our solar system dwindles away to a mere point and is lost in some star-cluster of the Milky Way. And then leave the confines of our home-universe, and pursue your cosmic course until our whole galaxy becomes a mere speck, as though it were but a single star itself. Approaching now the speed of thought, you would encounter new galaxies of stars and worlds and moons. But though you were to travel forever, you would never reach the end of the universe. You would never come to a point in space where you could say, "I have now reached the limits of the universe; I have passed the last of the stars."

Suppose then that you were to return home and meditate on what you have seen. You might feel that you had seen rather much; you might feel that you had seen rather little "no, more, in fact than a telescope could have shown you, were it of sufficient power. What about the worlds invisible inhabiting the planes of consciousness above and within the physical, to wit, the spiritual, the intellectual, the astral realm, and so on, of which the Ancient Wisdom teaches? These no telescope can show us. Just as in our imaginary journey we saw celestial phenomena of all kinds, so there are wonders to behold on these inner planes, had we the eyes to see. Thus we find that our "limitless" universe is indeed limited, because it is physical; its sights are restricted to purely physical manifestations of life.

What is the boundary separating our physical universe from the inner

planes? There is no real dividing-line at all. That which sets the limit to our universe is our own inability to see and to cognize. The horizon is that imaginary line which divides the world's surface into two parts: that portion which we see, and that portion which, due to the curvature of the earth, we do not see. Let us then judge the universe, not by what we see, but by what we are privileged to learn about it in the writings and teachings of the Sages and Seers, past and present.

There is wonderful knowledge to be gained by a study of the Ancient Wisdom, which is at once Philosophy, Religion, and Science; and if a thing be approached from these three angles, a fully comprehensive understanding of it may be acquired. No doubt we will more readily concede this to be true in the study of man, but the nature of man cannot be fully understood unless we accept the fact that he is inseparably linked with the Cosmos about him, from which he draws his very life. Not only is it possible then to study the universe scientifically, religiously, and philosophically, but this *must* be done if we are to have a well-rounded picture of the Cosmos. Thus only can we turn on the light of Theosophy.

The universe, Theosophy declares, is composed entirely of forces; and so is man, and modern Science inclines toward this view. We are told by the most advanced thinkers of today that what we call "matter" is nothing more than electric energy. To this, Theosophy adds that behind all manifestation is intelligence, and it is through the operation of intelligent forces that this universe has come into being. In building for ourselves a picture of the universe then, there are three fundamental principles or axioms that we must bear in mind. Firstly, the philosophic axiom, *As above, so below*. This is a master-key, by the aid of which we may unlock numberless mysteries. It teaches the interdependence of all things, for all things are in essence one. What is true of the nature of man



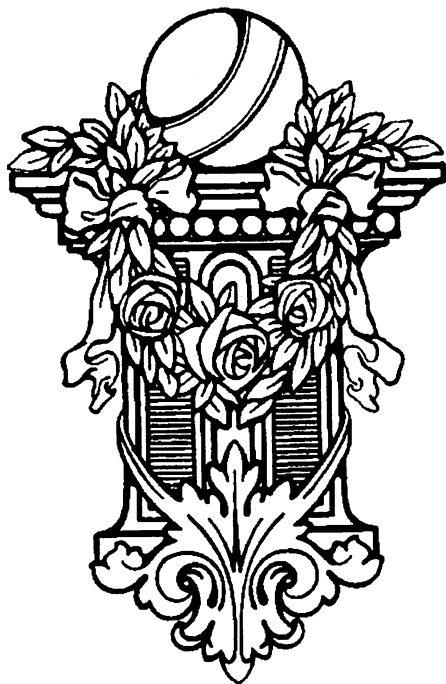
is true of the sun. Universe and atom alike are composite in nature. The second key is the religious aphorism, *Man, know thyself*" another master-key closely related to the first. Could we but know the mysteries of consciousness and the sevenfold nature of man in their completeness, we should have full knowledge of the universe. A third key, the scientific, is that *all things are relative*. In the last analysis nothing is great, nothing small; all things are relatively great or small, in relative degrees of development, with relative manifestations of consciousness. Bearing these three truths well in mind, let us proceed to our study, and endeavor to understand this bewildering universe about us.

The vast cosmic scheme is nothing if not the manifestation and working of consciousness. Consciousness is the great mystery, about which very little can be said; it is the Boundless All, the vital drive of the universe, endless, infinite, within all and containing all, ever-present, and yet utterly indescribable. It is space itself, and duration, and its counterpart is substance. By substance I do not mean matter in any form such as we know it to be, or such as we imagine it to be even in the electronic state (i.e., it is neither gaseous, liquid, nor solid).

Cosmic substance might best be described as the great matrix, the womb from which are born the galaxies filling all planes of being. Thus substance is not confined to any so-called plane of consciousness, any more than is consciousness, its counterpart. The universe comes into bloom when consciousness unites with substance, and becomes an infinitude of consciousnesses, clothed in substance and manifesting as numberless lives, which in their vast aggregate form this living universe. The lowest grades of substance temporarily become what we recognize as matter, composed of 92 chemical elements " but only so long as consciousness is there. If this is so in the case of the universe, it is equally true of man. Man is the manifestation of human consciousness, one of those infinitudes of consciousness before alluded to. This consciousness-center combined with cosmic substance and brought man into being. The seven planes of consciousness forming man we call his seven principles; but to the endless numbers of lives subservient to the man, they are the playgrounds, the fields of activity, in other words, the planes of consciousness, in which they live, move, and have their being. Similarly, a sun is the manifestation of a solar con-

sciousness, for only a solar consciousness could so manifest; the plant is the embodiment of a plant-consciousness; and an atom, of an atomic-consciousness. All these are composite of seven principles, elements, planes, call them what you will, and all of these are part and parcel of the whole, subservient to the ruling consciousness embodied as our Home-Universe. And even that exalted being is but one of many, a building-block, let us say, helping to build and sustain the manifestation of a super-cosmic being as a super-cosmic universe. Who can say that the universe will ever be finished?

Apply now the second key. Study man, learn the mysteries of his nature, apply the law of analogy, and learn to know and love this universe, ever evolving, ever becoming. And then the third key, the relativity of all things, which stresses the fact that brotherhood, that is, spiritual brotherhood, is a fact in Nature, indeed the fundamental law whereby the cosmos is knit together. Essentially consciousness is One, its manifestations legion. The purpose of evolution is the endless journey of the many back to the One, only to proceed again at the dawn of a new Cosmic day, to build universes anew, in a never-ending pageant of Life.



## A HOLE IN THE WHOLE

Joyce Fitzgerald

*The Theosophical Journal*, (T.S., England);  
July - August 1994.

This short article is an attempt to bring together some thoughts and ideas on the esoteric implications of the hole in the ozone layer surrounding our planet. The subject is a serious and a complex one, while I would not attempt any scientific approach perhaps we could explore a purely metaphysical point of view.

My first proposition is that the hole in the ozone layer is, in effect a thinning of the etheric body of the planet. This would be the physio-etheric plane

of the etheric " the densest part just beyond the physical level."

Perhaps it would be appropriate at this point to list the seven principles in the human, bearing in mind that we are a microcosm of the macrocosm.

1. The physical body
2. The etheric body (sometimes called *jiva* or *prana*)
3. The astral body
4. Lower *Manas* (sometimes called animal soul or *Kama Rupa*)
5. Higher *Manas* (sometimes called human soul or *Manas*)
6. *Buddhi*
7. *Atma*

The second principle " the etheric body " is the vehicle for *prana*, the energizing life-force in nature, perhaps



the etheric equivalent of the glucose molecule in the physical plane. The etheric body forms a matrix within which this energy circulates and it is intimately linked to the greater etheric vehicle of the Planetary Logos. Once this is understood it becomes obvious that the actions and condition of the individual have a direct effect on the planet and the reverse will also be true. The changes occurring in the planetary body will have a direct effect on ourselves and all other life-forms within the planetary web.

In contact healing (therapeutic touch) there is a flow of *pranic* energy from healer to patient. If the healer is sensitive to changes in the aura of the patient it is often possible to locate those places in the body where the surrounding field is different in some way. This may register as hotter or cooler, rougher or smoother or, especially, as thicker or thinner. The change need not be in the area of the pain or injury but can show itself elsewhere, perhaps following one of the meridians used in acupuncture.

Remembering then that our etheric body is joined to the planetary etheric body, it seems logical to suggest that disease in humanity will find expression in the planet itself. I would suggest, therefore, that the thinning of the field around a patient which the healer can feel in therapeutic touch might compare with the thinning of the etheric body of the earth "a hole in the whole, so to speak.

My second proposition is purely intuitive in approach and has no medical or scientific foundation. While the implications of the first are certainly serious, those of the second (if followed to their logical conclusion) would be life-threatening. The subject of cancer is one which until recent years

was felt by many people to be too sensitive and frightening for open discussion. My feeling is that our relationship to our earth can be compared to the relationship of the cells within our body to their greater whole "ourselves."

If we look at the planetary chains and rounds we shall see that our present globe is the densest in the chain. Also our fifth root-race is at the position which corresponds to the transition from the densest point in matter; we are, in fact, moving towards a more etheric way of being. With the deeper descent into matter comes the greater possibility of loss of the vital knowledge and realization that we are indeed part of a greater whole. We have the potential for self-destruction because we no longer have the experience of the inter-relationship of all sentient life.

This potential is realized when humans act against other kingdoms in nature, exploiting the mineral and vegetable kingdoms and cruelly and wastefully abusing the animal kingdom. In the end, man acts against himself. In his inability to comprehend his true position in the scheme of things he creates situations which cause pain and death. His anger leads to war, his greed brings about starvation, and his ignorance causes sickness and death. In effect, mankind behaves like a mutant cell within the planetary body.

For many centuries remedies for cancer have been used with varying degrees of success: doctors now agree that, after prevention, the vital thing is to treat the disease in its early stages. Although much attention is now being given to "gentle" treatments such as homeopathy, vitamin therapy and vegetarianism, the main medical recourse is still to radiation treatment or surgery.

So, then, if man is the microcosm of the macrocosm, and he behaves like a cancerous cell within the greater body of the planet upon which he lives and of which he is an integral part, is not possible the radiation treatment we

ourselves use might now be used against us? If indeed the depleted ozone layer now allows more of the radiation from the sun to penetrate our atmosphere might this not be a planetary reaction to its internal problem "ourselves?"

This theory could perhaps hinge on comparative time what has been described as "the moment of perception." Thus, I take a pin and prick my finger. The time taken for me to see the pin and feel the pain is a fraction of a second; this is my moment of perception. It will, of course, be much longer in planetary terms. If an event takes place within the planet (perhaps a war, a nuclear explosion or industrial pollution) it may take years "sometimes centuries" for the reaction to take place and the effects to show. It becomes very difficult for us to understand the mechanism of cause and effect in our planetary home. But might we be on the point of receiving a dose of our own medicine "radiation?"

My third proposition has a more optimistic note. The DNA molecule shows itself to be a double-spiral, perhaps reflecting the greater spiral of cosmic evolution. As we move upwards on this spiral the note or vibration of our planet becomes higher. Remembering that our own etheric matrix is part of a greater etheric field, we have the opportunity to aim our own note to the highest possible point within this sphere and by so doing we can ease our own transition and that of our planetary logos into the next loop of the spiral. In effect, we stay in tune with the greater being within whom we live.

We are at present poised between the two great ages of Pisces and Aquarius "very different in their qualities and in their expression. As in music (the octave) and color (the spectrum) the next note and color will be very different in sound and appearance from the preceding one. The shift between some notes on the scale appears greater than between others, although they follow in a natural order. The same correspondence might be



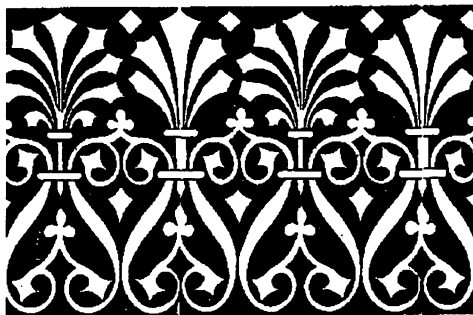
used on the spiral of evolution. The transition between certain stages seems greater due to their different qualities.

It is perhaps no coincidence that there is now a quickening of awareness and increasing knowledge of ourselves and our environment. We are moving from an age whose qualities reflected belief to one whose qualities reflect knowledge. As our attention turns from a material state

to a more ethereal existence, our etheric body begins to vibrate at a higher frequency and can accommodate larger amounts of *pranic* energy. This follows the raising of the vibrational field of our planet, now poised to accommodate more *pranic* energy by a reduction in the denser part of the etheric web.

The consumption of meat, alcohol and tobacco tends to lower the natural vibration of the etheric body, and can

damage it and make it less able to accommodate increased *pranic* activity. Perhaps the recent trend towards vegetarianism, no smoking and less alcohol stems from an inner awareness that the planetary note is changing and that we need to adapt to it. It may be, then, that the hole within the whole heralds an age of greater awareness and, let us hope, of greater knowledge " holistic, of course!



### "L'APPROCHE..."

Gottfried de Purucker

Leader of the Theosophical Society of Point Loma, 1929 to 1942

"Approach" may not be the best English translation. "Worthy of Consideration" might in this instance convey the meaning better. The interesting thing is that *Le Lotus Bleu*, official organ of the Theosophical Society in France" (Adyar), in its November 1994 issue, presenting the idea of "Methods of Theosophical Work," under the above title *L'Approche*, quotes from one of Dr. de Purucker's public talks given on his 1937 lecture tour. Evidently it is felt that in these extracts is sound food for careful thought. It was in that year, of more than a half a century ago, that G. deP. went to many cities in Sweden, Denmark, and Holland (where at The Hague, on September 25 to 26, the European Convention of the T.S., Point Loma, was held). Then after a fortnight in the Netherlands, on to the British Isles, speaking in Cardiff, Wales; in Port and Dublin, Ireland; on to Liverpool, England; Glasgow, Scotland; Middleton-in-Teasdale, Bishop Auckland, Manchester, Bristol, Sidmouth, Bournemouth, and finally to London, England, giving all of the groups "...a vision of growth and expansion and the means of achieving these." A full report by Iverson L. Harris, the tour's correspondent, is given in *The Theosophical Forum*, issues of October and of November 1938. We quote now the extract given in *Le Lotus Bleu*, from G. deP.'s address to the T.S. Lodge, Liverpool, on October 6, 1937.

"I have found something likewise which has been extremely grateful to me; and it is that our members are now beginning to realize that there are diverse ways of doing our Theosophical work.

I mean to drive this fact home everywhere I go. In some towns it is best to work in a certain way, which each lodge must find out for itself. In other towns or cities conditions are such that a somewhat different approach to the public is required; and wherever these towns are the lodges in them must find out that way that is best for themselves. They are on the respective spots; they labor in that particular field; and it is for them very diligently and intelligently to study, each lodge its own ground and to ascertain what the psychology of the people is among whom they live and work, and to approach that psychology intelligently.

I believe it is all wrong to send out instructions from Point Loma after a cut-and-dried fashion that our different Sections and Lodges should all work after a stilted and crystallized pattern. Conditions in the different countries vary so enormously, and even in one country conditions vary enormously.

My first point is that I have seen a growing realization of this fact, and I am delighted.

Now, this does not mean that the lodges of the T.S. follow divergent paths. It is all one pathway that all Theosophic work and propaganda follow, but for each lodge there is some special or specific way which is the best for it. Try to find out what is that specific and particular way here.

Furthermore, our Theosophical workers must clearly understand, if they are to be successful in their beautiful work which we all so love, that we must do it with the instruments which every son or daughter of man has " with the heart and with the head: the intellect and the understanding heart must combine.

I believe it to be an entirely wrong psychology, introducing the dead letter into Theosophical work, merely for the members of a lodge to think that the only way to give Theosophy to others is by quoting extensively from books. That is excellent as one of the means of Theosophical propaganda. But such quotations ordinarily must not be presented word for word but given with a freshness arising in the mind and in the heart of the speaker himself or herself. This makes an immediate, a direct appeal to the hearers. Otherwise you have a stilted way, an artificial way, a very unsympathetic way of presenting Theosophy, and it is often repellent.

Or again, an equal folly... " fortunately there is very little of it... " is to try to teach Theosophy by what some people call feeling, emotion, gush. That is equally offensive. Try to combine heart and intellect together and give them both to your audience. It will always attract. Try to add freshness to it from your own consciousness and understanding of the teachings. This makes things very fresh and bright and interesting. It gives life...



## HOPE

Talbot Mundy

*The Theosophical Path*, May 1924

The aspects of Theosophy are infinite, but Hope is foremost at our present stage of evolution. For without Hope there would be no aim in living, and that poet who wrote "Hope springs eternal" was an accurate observer of eternal truth. The difficulty is, that hope, as it is commonly accepted, is a chancy, vain, imaginary creature of the lower senses, based on appetite and doomed inevitably to be disappointed for the reason that although its objects may appear to be attained, they are illusory. The yearnings of the lower hope are selfish; they are rooted in doubt, which is ignorance, and in personality, which is fraud; they presuppose that there can be effect without its cause or an effect not justly and exactly consequent upon its cause. But true Hope knows there is a Higher Law which guides the Universe, and that as surely as the sun shines there is a Higher Purpose, which includes all individuals within its scope and works infallibly, through evolution, toward an outcome too glorious for human brains to comprehend. The Higher Hope is an expression of the knowledge of the Soul.

It appears to be a rule that every aspect of the Higher Nature must be counterfeited on the lower plane, and though that is ultimately only an illusion, it is nonetheless a practical condition now with which we must cope. We have accepted a physical world, and human birth that subjects us to physical circumstances; and it is with those that we must deal, although there is a popular philosophy which claims that, everything being illusion in this world, and illusion having no existence, all we have to do is to assert the truth of being and be prosperous.

## HERE WE ARE. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT IT?

But that popular philosophy overlooks this all-important detail; those very senses with which we are invited to assert the truth of being are themselves illusory; those senses do not know the truth of being, are incapable of knowing it, and no amount of technical phrasing or mass-psychology can give them power to change the effect of cause or to avoid the results of ignorance. It is very easy to admit that physical conditions must be unreal, when discomfort forces us to yearn for comfort; it is not so easy to admit that, however, when fortune appears to favor us; and the admission becomes impossible, except as a mere obstinate reiteration of a formula, when we find ourselves obliged to take action of any kind. Action presupposes the reality of that on which we act and react. We find ourselves, to all practical intents and purposes, in the midst of conditions in which it is impossible to foresee, or even to guess the immediate, to say nothing of the ultimate outcome; and although, as for instance in war, we can sometimes force an issue, not the ablest human brain can calculate what the real effect of that force will be, to ourselves or to others.

Recognition of this fact has led to fatalism. Rebellion against it leads to mediumship, fortune-telling, and innumerable doctrines that aim at establishing control of unseen forces by means of which the individual is supposed to be able to rise above necessity and justify his own immediate desires. A glimpse of the world through the pages of the daily newspapers is proof enough that very few of us are satisfied with circumstances as they are, and that very many of us are applying opposed and often violent remedies, the only outcome of which must be chaos. And yet, Hope springs eternal. The sun rises. The stars keep their appointed places in the sky. And here we are. What is this Hope that so inspires us, even in the face of superficial fatalism and continuous calamity? What is the

Higher Impulse that impels us constantly?

## HOPE KNOWS

We see in crudest form the lower hope and its absurdities when a man hopes for rain, and his wife for fine weather; or when some individuals hope that prices of commodities will rise, while others hope with equal fervor that the same prices will fall. Criminals hope for a successful outcome of their crime. It used to be a practice in many coast settlements to hope, and even to pray to God, for a good shipwreck to enrich the community; and it is no rare thing in modern life to hope for the downfall of another nation or rival mercantile concern, on the supposition that the disaster may benefit others. We have all heard the expression "I hope he may choke," and most of us have shared the sentiment at some time or another, even if we have not voiced it. Gamblers hope that someone else may lose in order that they may win. There are innumerable forms, some not so crude as others, in which this counterfeit of Hope has grown familiar to all of us; and, since its essence is that somebody must be disappointed in order that somebody else may profit, there are few who will deny that at its very best it is no more than an emotion, based on ignorance of what is really going to happen. The lower hope is speculative, at its best, not moral, and never in the long run satisfying. But the Higher Hope is born of knowledge of the Higher Law. It is the breath of that knowledge, its divine and satisfying presence. It is eternal, all-embracing, and it knows.

The surest way to become hopeless is to hope for material reward for spiritual effort; that brings swift and dire dissatisfaction. A material goal precludes all knowledge of what spiritual values are, although the false hope may persuade us that we are striving spiritually, and the ultimate effect is consequently doubly disappointing. To seek spiritual knowledge in order to apply it to material ends is the rankest sacrilege and is more





inevitably dangerous than to linger a while long in frank materialism; because to be a self-confessed materialist infers sincerity, which is a virtue, whereas hypocrisy is the meanest, most cowardly and fatal shape that the lower hope assumes. There is no hypocrisy in the Higher Hope, no doubt, no self-deception.

### FAITH, HOPE, AND LOVE, ARE ONE

Optimism, in the ordinary meaning of the word, is hardly an advance on pessimism, being only the reverse of it; the one "hopes for the best" without justification, the other "looks for the worst" and very often fails to find it. The last degree of optimism is the hope that the observance of some stipulated forms of worship will pilot the faithful ritualist into heaven, where all traces of sin will vanish instantly and there will be no awkward consequences from the misdeeds of the past; and the last degree of pessimism is the mad belief in hell, where no good deeds can ever be rewarded and eternity is one long torture. Hope "true Hope, that is" knows neither of these lawless lower-plane inventions, but exists, triumphant, knowing that Justice, though tempered with mercy, is unfailing and is utterly inseparable from existence.

Faith, Hope, and Love, that divine Triad so often named, so seldom understood, are One, and cannot be understood if the attempt is made to separate them or to limit them within the confines of materiality. They are spiritual "that is infinite and universal. Even momentary apprehension of them brings us into harmony with all the unseen, spiritual forces of the Universe, asserting in our consciousness the true divinity of man.

Hope is the voice of the Soul that assures us all is well, and that experience, of any kind whatever, is a means by which we may learn how to live in our Higher Nature instead of yielding to the ignorant solicitations of the lower. Faith is conviction of the Higher Universal Purpose that includes all life in one grand scheme of evolution. Love

is recognition of the Universal Brotherhood that would not, even if it could, exclude one individual from its all-comprehensive school of experience.

### THE EXPRESSION OF HOPE IS DEEDS

We know, and mock the fecklessness of Charles Dickens's Micawber, who was always expecting "something to turn up"; and even on the mere material plane of day to day affairs, in which no law is recognized except the hour's necessity, we act on the assumption that we must do something before we can get anything. The lowest criminal and the vilest sensualist alike know that the satisfaction they seek can only be attained by action in some form or other; and their acts are the expression of the hope they entertain; the viler their desires, the worse the acts that they commit. Not hearing that Hope which is the Soul's voice singing of the Universal Purpose, they are deceived by the counterfeit voice that echoes in the empty caverns of the lower self, where envy and suspicion and all Truth's opposites hold sway, in darkness.

All deeds "even the Micawber-like indignity of doing almost nothing" are expression of some form of hope; and the effect of acts committed is related intimately to the hope that governs them. The lower hope is blind; it calculates in minutes, hours "at most in terms of one short lifetime limited by death, whose hour is unpredictable. The Higher Hope, triumphant in the knowledge of the Universal Law, assured that every deed produces justly and exactly measured consequences, inspires deeds that not only can do no harm, but that must contribute to the universal benefit. It finds its expression now, in deeds that are utterly unselfish, and it leaves their consequences to the Higher Law. Hope exists in beneficial action.

### THE EXPRESSION OF FAITH IS DEEDS

Faith is the strength and the substance of Hope. It is the knowledge that the



Higher Law exists and deals unerring justice. Faith is the begetter of sincerity, that staunchest of virtues, which, if a man has it, will redeem "inevitably must redeem" him, howsoever gross his sins. Few words are more abused than Faith in the everyday interpretation; like the lower hope, the lower faith is nothing but a counterfeit. It varies from a so-called faith in luck to a belief in a vicarious *salvation* based on the acceptance of stipulated doctrine. Men speak of keeping faith with one another, who have not the remotest notion of what real Faith is, and who have no intention of preserving even the appearance of honesty toward any but their own immediate acquaintances. Such faith is either a belief based on ignorance, a loosely applied synonym for policy, or unadulterated fraud. It is a label which hypocrisy too easily applies to selfish plans, and, like personal honor, it depends for its interpretation on the personal caprice of those who walk in ignorance or in defiance of the Higher Law.

True Faith is more impregnable than iron. It is divine. Its strength increases in emergency. It governs deeds, ignoring the emotions of the moment and the threats of temporary storm. It knows no compromise. It is the consciousness of true divinity, the will to hope, the confident acceptance of the Higher Law, the essence of all right action. There is no fear in Faith, for fear cannot exist in contact with it. Faith and Hope together are the very spirit of the trees and flowers, of the stars and the clouds and the rolling rivers that bear the dust of mountains to the sea to make new earth for unborn continents.

Faith, discerning *now* to be the presence of eternity, postpones no proper duty to a more convenient time. As the sun makes its presence felt by light and heat, Faith finds its being in

deeds. Its very breath is action. It knows neither haste nor weariness, but everlastingly supplies the energy of Hope and Love.

### THE EXPRESSION OF LOVE IS DEEDS

Not even Faith is commonly more misinterpreted than Love. The whole dark fiber of sensuality, double-dyed with sentiment, is woven into a shroud with which to hide the glory of divine Love. The rankest, most destructive forms of selfishness are used to screen Love's rays. There is not one foul crime that has not been committed in Love's name. Men speak of Love, and store up deadly gas with which to poison men of other nations; they preach concerning Love, and hang convicted boys, whose crimes were mainly due to other men's neglect or other men's example. The doctrine "Love ye one another" is regarded as extremely good advice to other men to love us and our peculiarities, but is not allowed to influence us much in our initiative toward them.

Yet Love is recognition of the fact of Universal Brotherhood and is inseparable from Faith and Hope. It is the opposite of selfishness. Its action is obedience to the Law that no good can be gained except by benefiting all, and injury to one is injury to all, the injurer included. Being totally unselfish in its motive, the first impulse of divine Love stirring in the consciousness is toward self-regeneration in order that the self may not harm or impede others; and the instant companions of that impulse are the voice of Hope, that

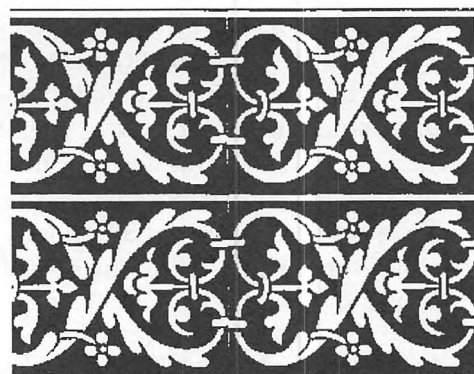
foretells progress, and the thrill of Faith assuring us of what the Bible calls "the everlasting arms" "the Forces that support and guide the constellations, Mother Nature, and ourselves.

Neither Hope nor Faith nor Love are in any way conditioned by the senses, which they purify and change until the lower nature yields under the invincible influence of the Higher and we see the grandest of all triumphs "one step upward in man's evolution. Hope, then, has a wider view, and understanding dawns that evolution is eternal and the spiritual progress of the individual is linked inseparably with the life of every living thing.

### HOPE, FAITH, LOVE, RESPONSIBILITY

Thereafter, Hope becomes a challenge. No retrogression then, no overwhelming flood of circumstance can drown the consciousness of individual responsibility. We know, for Hope has told us and the inspiration cannot die, that we direct our destiny and reap exactly as we sow. The Law, that as we do to others shall be done to us, becomes intelligible and so blended in our thought that every action is intuitively governed by it. Not a circumstance arises but we recognize the challenge to maintain our spiritual vision and to reject the suggestions of our lower nature in order that the Higher may prevail and benefit mankind.

Illimitable fields lie fallow in the view of Hope, awaiting husbandry. No three-score years and ten outline the vision. Temporary barriers that name themselves impossible, and temporary needs that trumpet their importance, sink to insignificance in the perspective when the Higher Hope reveals the spiritual truth of rebirth and the endless scope of action. When it dawns on understanding that a deed done now *must* has its corresponding consequence and that, in after-lives forever, we *must* feel in our environment the unspent sum of every effort we have made unselfishly for others; when we realize that out of deeds done now power to do greater deeds is born, the least, unnoticed effort becomes

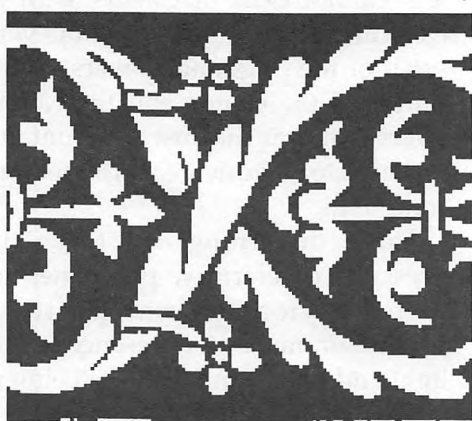


glorious, and every waking minute then presents itself as golden opportunity.

### THE SANCTUARY OF THE SOUL

Time loses its hypnotic spell when Hope outcharms it. We become aware of a new reckoning of time, in spiritual terms, recording spiritual progress. Within the sanctuary of the Soul, where no material sense-clouds can dim or tumult penetrate, the secret knowledge of the Higher Law broods permanently and inspires to wise, unselfish action that contributes to the universal need instead of flattering the temporary mood of passing hours. So Hope engenders wisdom, of which ignorance knows nothing, and the ignorant attempts of those who lend themselves to malice fail because they cannot even see the goal or comprehend the purpose. In the Sanctuary of the Soul "the Secret Place of the Most High," the Psalmist calls it "he who recognizes the inspiring challenge of the Higher Hope is safe.

Hope, inseparably joined to Faith and Love, is no weak suppliant, no pleading seeker to escape responsibility. Hope urges no remission of the sins of selfishness but challenges experience to bring forth opportunity, so that the consequences of wrong action may be met and lessons mastered. Responsibility is Hope's proud Gonfalon. No blame of others, no attempt to justify wrong-doing by the plea that others did the same, or worse, no self-pity and no self-righteousness can live within Hope's realm, where all the consequences of the past are bravely met and, moment after moment, though on thought and deed on deed, the foundations of the future are deliberately laid.



## SPIRITUAL EVOLUTION

Vain regrets and vain desires all vanish in the light of Hope. Mere personal ambitions, sloth, inertia, and jealousy all cease. The grander vision of the spirally ascending march of spiritual evolution so absorbs the thought that every word and deed assume new values and are governed by a higher motive. Health responds. The Law of Karma may impose conditions that may not be avoided, but Hope gives royal courage and supplies the strength with which to meet them "strength, and the assurance that a Universal Brotherhood will be the better for one Soul's experience well met and triumphed over.

The only selfishness permitted in the realm of Hope is self-watchfulness, self-discipline, self-control, with one unselfish end in view: that we may not harm others or neglect one opportunity to serve the whole world wisely. Pride of achievement becomes as offensive in ourselves as false humility, or as a loathsome habit, as soon as Hope reveals to us the limitless eternity of spiritual evolution; for true achievement, though it satisfies, impels to further effort; though it thrills with proof of power and responsibility, it lays bare need for self-regeneration never previously dreamed of.

## HOPE SPRINGS ETERNAL

Old-age, illness, and adversity are transient and not discouraging incidents when the Higher Law is recognized and Hope reveals how limitless and universal are our opportunities, how grand our destiny, and how each spiritual conquest of the self contributes to the evolution of the Universal Brotherhood. No thought is lost; no effort made to lessen the anguish of one individual is made in vain; each spiritual thought admitted into consciousness is added to the common store and helps in the regeneration of the world.

The lower, sensual, blind hope is never satisfied and never can be, for it seeks contentment in a rearrangement of the evils that provide its impulse; it is ever looking to find

happiness in some conclusion and to reach a state of "thus far and no further" in which the lower nature may indulge itself unchallenged by the Soul. It presupposes a beginning and an end; it assumes that justice is not inevitable; it supposes that material comfort and material success are the purpose of life and the goal, not only of all energy, but of religion. When it accepts, to save itself from tiresome creed and ritual observance, the less restricting view of evolution, it excites itself with what it thinks is new-found freedom, casts all self-discipline aside, and gives rein to the self-indulgence

that convention hitherto had held in check. There is no wisdom and no safety in the lower hope, nor any peace.

But to the Higher Hope each new discovery of Universal Law is spiritual healing and a trumpet-call to rise to higher vision yet, uncluttered by the rubbish of the lower senses. Knowing there is no beginning and no end, discerning the ascending, ever-satisfying, ever-challenging, and infinitely various delight of self-directed evolution, true Hope springs eternal, brave and buoyant, Truth her watchword, Brotherhood her breath, the Ancient Wisdom her aspiring wings.

## NEWS AND NOTES

### CONFERENCE SEMINAR

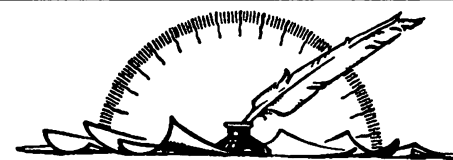
A gathering of Theosophists and friends of Theosophy was held July 9, 1994, in Julian, San Diego County, California. "Similarities of Aim, Purpose and Teachings for Theosophical Students and Groups" was the main theme, the meeting being attended by United Lodge of Theosophists members (host), T.S. American Section (Adyar), Point Loma Publications, and T.S. of Pasadena. A further meeting was held at another friend's home in October, and regular follow-on meetings planned.

### OLCOTT INSTITUTE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN AMERICA

Publishes in its Autumn 1994 issue the list of residential courses of studies. For copy of this and for information about correspondence courses from the Olcott Institute, write to Olcott Institute of T.S. in America, 1926 N. Main Street, PO Box 270, Wheaton, IL 60189-0270.

### LECTURE SERIES

The Long Beach T.S. Branch (Dr. Robert Bonnell, President), opens its January-March number with lecture given January 8th by Clair Walker, "Secrets of Theosophy as Revealed by the Work 'The Secret Doctrine'"; and ends (March 17) with "Crucified Saviors, a Symbolic Cross-Examination" by Nancy Coker.



*Theosophical History: Occasional Papers*, Vol. III (James A. Santucci, ed.) includes "Ammonius Saccas and his 'Eclectic Philosophy' as Presented by Alexander Wilder" (with portrait). Part One: "The Genesis of Wilder's 'Eclectic Philosophy'," Part Two: "What is Really Known of Ammonius Saccas?"

### FAMOUS THEOSOPHISTS

Under this title *The American Theosophist*, Autumn 1994, devotes many of its pages to the life and accomplishments of Annie Besant, "Annie Besant, as Champion of Women's Rights" (by Nancy Fix Anderson), "The Compassionate Annie Besant" (Mary Jane Newcomb). An article by Annie Besant titled "The Place of Peace and the Threefold Path" is adapted from *The Spiritual Life*; and Joy Mills (now National President of the Theosophical Society in Australia) writes and "Exposition on Annie Besant's Universal Invocation" (with a light editorial replacing of the last two lines): "O hidden Life, vibrant in every atom,/ O hidden Light, shining in every creature,/ O hidden Love, embracing all in Oneness;/ May all who feel themselves as one with Thee/ know they are therefore one with every other."



## AND OF MAGAZINES

### ATMA VIDYA

Continues with No. 4: "Nirvana-Moksha" by H.P.B.; also by her, "Hatha Yoga"; "Karma-Yoga"; "Jnana Yoga." By W.Q. Judge, "The Yoga of Action"; and by Damodar K. Mavalankar, "Raja Yoga: Contemplation." Also included are fragments from the *The Voice of the Silence*; *The Four Noble Truths*; *The Noble 8-Fold Path of the Buddha*, and *The Paramitas* by H.P.B. with commentary by G. de Purucker (with pictures of the authors throughout the magazine.) All in Spanish.

### KROTONA SCHOOL OF THEOSOPHY, WINTER-SPRING WORKSHOP PROGRAM, 1995

Includes "Messages to America from H.P. Blavatsky" (February 14-16 workshop) who says these messages might be called the "Charter for the Theosophical Society in America," because in them she addresses matters "that concern Americans especially... containing timeless and universal wisdom about living Theosophy." Also workshop by John Algeo, (February 27 - March 3), on "Gods, Death, Love and Enlightenment" from *The Mahabharata*, "the greatest epic in the world" which "expresses the ideals and traditions of heroic India and also of all humanity."

In the workshop conducted by Pedro Oliveira: "Mysticism: Bridge to Nowhere," fundamental teachings of several mystics are explored, including Rumi, Eckhart, St. Paulo, and the content of *The Voice of the Silence*, *Light on the Path*; also "The Way to Wisdom in the Spiritual Traditions," and "Human Regeneration" based on a book by Radha Burnier (Adyar T.S. Int. President). "A further workshop conducted by Adam Warcup (former Gen. Sec. TS in England) is titled "A Mind to Embrace the Universe" (April 25 - May 5).



### THEOSOPHICAL HISTORY, A QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF RESEARCH

James A. Santucci, Ed., has among other interesting articles two by John Cooper (Australia) "The Scope of Theosophical History," and "Theosophists and Others in Fiction." Included also, are notes by Michael Gomes, "From the Archives: The Letters of H.P. Blavatsky to W.Q. Judge," Part I, letter dated 1 May 1885; and a review essay, "Basarrah Nicolescu's *Science, Meaning, & Evolution: The Cosmology of Jacob Boehme*," by Karen-Claire Voss.

We note with interest that several smaller theosophical magazines have published the words of G. De Purucker about the Winter Solstice (reprinted from his 4th General Letter to Point Loma members, and reprinted in *The Eclectic Theosophist*, Winter 1992.) Among these is *Ancient Wisdom* (Theosophical Society of Saint Louis; and *The High Country Theosophist*, (R. Slusser, ed.) December 1994 issue. Its November issue carried interesting article "The Misadventures of Djual Khool" by Sven Eek, compiler of *Damodar and the Pioneers of the Theosophical Movement*, an extract from that volume.

R. Slusser also wrote in an HCT number:

It seems unhelpful and inappropriate for the HCT to focus and dwell upon negative topics...that I know nothing about. I have a distinct aversion to what seems to me to be paranoia in the view that there exists a gigantic underground conspiracy, of some kind or other, bent on doing us in! To enter into such an editorial adventure, I feel, would alienate the readers I am trying to serve. The labelling of 'good guys' and 'bad guys' only serves to reinforce the illusion of separateness and is inimical to 'the formation of a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity.'

## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### DER THEOSOPHISCHE PFAD

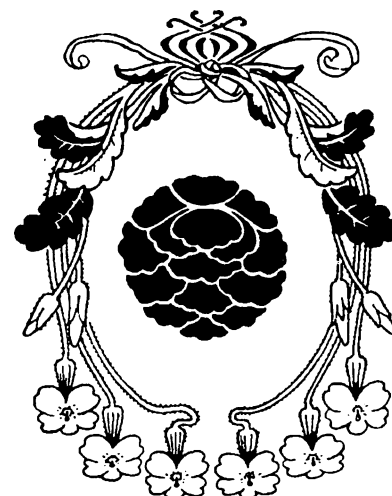
(Ed. Irmgard Scheithauer, Landshuter Str. 33, 10779 Berlin, Germany)

Its January/February 1995 number carries articles: "True and False Occultism," by Katherine Tingley (*The Wine of Life*); "On the Future: A Few Reflections," by W.Q. Judge (*Echoes of the Orient*, II, 20-24); extracts from H.P. Blavatsky's *Isis Unveiled*, I, 561-4, about the ancient ruins of Nagkon-Wat; and "The Ensouling of Man," by G. de Purucker (*Wind of the Spirit*, 93-5).

### THEOSOFISCH FORUM

(Eds. Mw. A.J. Schipper and E. Tillema, Hortenstresse 20, 2906 CR Capelle a/d IJssel)

Lists 15 Theosophical groups in the Netherlands, with addresses and phone numbers, and announces programs for public meetings for January through April 1995, with speakers E. Tillema, T. Prince, J. v.d. Sluis, and Mw. W. Schmit. Also includes article by the latter on "The Power of Silence," given at the 1994 T.S. Convention.



### FUNDAMENTALS OF THE ESOTERIC PHILOSOPHY

(A note from Willy Schmit, The Hague, Netherlands)

"*Fundamentals* is so packed with thoughts that every time you go back to an earlier chapter it seems as if you read it for the first time. You cannot grasp the meaning otherwise than bit by bit."

## POLESHIFTS

David Pratt (*The Hague Holland*)

(Some comments on Richard Robb's article "Our Thoughts, Our Earth", *The Eclectic Theosophist*, Fall 1994)

Richard Robb argues that there is evidence that the earth was hit by a major cataclysm 13,000 years ago and by one of lesser magnitude about 6500 years ago, and that these events may have involved a poleshift. He suggests that the most plausible scenario is that the earth's crust slipped over the interior, while the axis remained tilted at 23.5 degrees.

The idea that from time to time the earth's outer shell has slid over the interior has been most fully developed by Charles Hapgood in his book *The Path of the Pole* (1970). Hapgood argues that there have been three crustal displacements during the past 100,000 years: the north pole was in Hudson Bay during the last ice age, and moved the 30° to its present location between 17,000 and 12,000 years ago, at an average speed of about 1000 feet per year; the pole shifted to Hudson Bay from the Greenland Sea between 55,000 and 50,000 years ago, and to the Greenland Sea from the Yukon district of Canada between 80,000 and 75,000 years ago.

Hapgood claims that crustal slippage can explain ice ages, warm polar climates, volcanism, mountain building, and the elevation and subsidence of continents (which he rightly assigns a primary role, and continental drift a subsidiary role). He is not sure, however, exactly where the interface between the outer shell and the earth's interior lies. He suggests that either the rigid lithosphere (30-40 miles thick) glides over a liquid layer at the top of the viscous asthenosphere, or that the lithosphere and part of the asthenosphere slip over the fluid "wave-guide layer" at a depth of 100 miles. (Nothing resembling the wave-guide layer is mentioned in the current edition of *The Encyclopaedia Britannica*, so it may have gone out of fashion. Scientific models of the earth's interior are very hypo-

thetical.) Hapgood believes that crustal displacements are caused by gravitational imbalances within the lithosphere or immediately below it. While such imbalances certainly exist, it is questionable whether they are of sufficient magnitude to initiate a displacement of the entire crust.

Hapgood's arguments are certainly more cogent than those of Fred G. Plummer, who claims that 12,000 years ago a major cataclysm occurred involving a 60° displacement of the crust and a shift of the axis of over 20°; prior to this event the earth's axis was supposedly almost perpendicular to the plane of its orbit, the north pole was near the Mediterranean, and the equator approximately coincided with the "ring of fire" volcanoes bordering the Pacific Basin. This is catastrophism with a vengeance! Plummer fills his book on the subject with interesting quotations, but they fall far short of proving his wild theory (see *The Last Change of the Earth's Axis*, 1894, Isis Books reprint, 1994).

If the earth's crust were to shift over the interior, the direction of the four cardinal points would change. The Great Pyramid of Giza is aligned with the present cardinal points with almost perfect accuracy. This means that there could not have been a significant slippage of the earth's crust since the Pyramid was built. Since HPB says that the Great Pyramid was built about three precessional cycles (or 78,000 years) ago (SD 2:432), this rules out the last two or three crust displacements proposed by Hapgood. It also disposes of Plummer's theory, though Plummer gets round this by accepting the conventional view that the Pyramid was built in fairly recent times. It is worth noting that the Great Sphinx, also of great antiquity, faces due east. It is true that many ancient structures are not aligned with the present cardinal points, but this should not automatically be taken as evidence of crust displacement. Sir Norman Lockyer showed long ago that many Egyptian pyramids and temples are oriented to summer solstice sunrise or

sunset or to the rising of certain stars rather than to the cardinal points (the present equinoxes) (see *The Dawn of Astronomy*, 1894).

In addition to supporting the idea of crustal slippage, Robb also refers to Sampson Arnold Mackey's theory that the inclination of the earth's axis undergoes a continuous change of an average of 4 degrees every precessional cycle (*The Mythological Astronomy of the Ancients Demonstrated*, Wizards Bookshelf, 1973). HPB called Mackey the "self-made adept of Norwich", and both she and G. de Purucker appear to endorse his theory (SD 2:331, 408, 725-6, 768; *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, pp.346-7). According to modern science, the tilt of the earth's axis is currently declining by about 0.013° per century, but when it reaches about 21.5° it will start to increase again until it reaches its maximum angle of about 24.5°; each such complete oscillation is said to take about 41,000 years. According to theosophy, on the other hand, the tilt of the earth's axis, which is currently declining by an average of about 0.0154° per century, will eventually reach 0° and the change in inclination will then continue in the same direction, so that the earth will undergo a complete inversion of 360° in a period of about two and a third million years. In addition to this gradual, secular change, HPB implies that there are sudden axial disturbances from time to time, causing major cataclysms.

Mackey and HPB are not referring to merely a displacement of the earth's crust, but to a shift in the axial orientation of the entire mass of the earth (which would leave the four cardinal points unchanged). Robb says that this type of poleshift is unlikely because "one needs a fulcrum or celestial pry bar . . . which are not in evidence". Frederick J. Dick, who was one of HPB's pupils, and later lived and worked at Point Loma, took a different view. He argues that the subtle electromagnetic forces emanating from the sun, interacting with the earth's own magnetic emanations, especially at the poles,

could set up a dynamic torque sufficient to bring about both the precession of the equinoxes and the gradual inclination of the earth's axis (see *The Century Path*, October 31, 1909, pp.11-12).

A relevant question is just how solid the earth really is, and whether it even has a molten asthenosphere over which the lithosphere could slip. Dick seemed to favour the theory that the earth has some sort of gaseous interior. Robb says that W.Q. Judge hints that the earth may be hollow. In *The Ocean of Theosophy*, for example, Judge says that the mahatmas investigate all things and know "whether the earth is hollow or not" (pp.4-5). Another rather ambiguous reference can be found in *Echoes of the Orient*, Vol. 1, p.383. The most detailed article concerning the possibility of a hollow earth appeared in *The Theosophist*, July 1884, pp.251-4. The article is entitled "The Hollow Globe. By M.L. Sherman", and is a very positive review of a book entitled *The Hollow Globe; or the World's Agitator and Reconciler* (1871) written by W.F. Lyon on the basis of information received clairvoyantly by M.L. Sherman. The author of the article suggests that the source of Sherman's information was not a "spirit" but probably an adept. The article is unsigned but was almost certainly written by HPB. It is not, however, included in H.P. Blavatsky's *Collected Writings*. (See also, however, the brief remarks by the editor/HPB on page 246 of the July 1885 issue of *The Theosophist*.)

According to Robb, "Herodotus states he was told by the Egyptian priests that their records show the sun to have been twice arising elsewhere, once in the west and once in the south". The actual quotation from Herodotus, however, makes no reference to west or south: "The sun, however, had within this period of time [341 generations], on four several occasions, moved from his wonted course, twice rising where he now sets, and twice setting where now he rises" (*The Histories*, Book 2). This does not necessarily mean that the sun used to rise in the west and

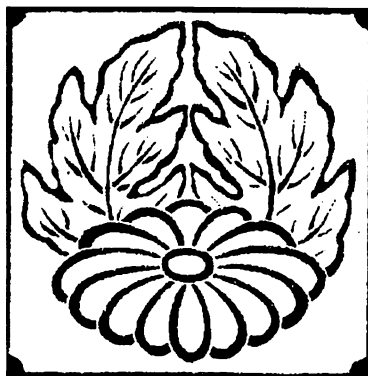
set in the east, because as long as the earth rotates on its axis from west to east, as it does at present, the sun will *always* rise in the east and set in the west, even when the poles are inverted — unless, of course, what we now call the earth's north pole is redefined as the south pole when its inclination exceeds 90°, so that the earth could then be said to rotate from east to west. Mackey suggests that Herodotus is actually referring to the *constellations* in which the sun rises and sets, which are reversed when the north pole passes through the ecliptic (the plane of the earth's orbit around the sun) (*Mythological Astronomy*, Appendix, pp.11-12). Norse mythology teaches that before the present order of things, the sun rose in the south, and the frigid zone was in the east rather than the north (SD 2:535). Plummer cites this as evidence of crust displacement, but it could also be interpreted as a graphic way of referring to a time when the earth's axis was in the plane of the ecliptic.

Robb refers to HPB's statement that the poles have been three times inverted since the establishment of the Egyptian zodiac (SD 2:353). He suggests that "inverted" may not be meant literally because, at the rate of 4 degrees per precessional cycle, Egypt's history would not provide enough time for three complete inversions. Since HPB says that the zodiac in the Egyptian Temple of Dendera shows the passage of over three precessional cycles (SD 2:332, 374fn, *Collected Writings* 11:7), one possible interpretation would certainly be that "inverted" simply means that the axis has *moved* (by 4 degrees) in each of the last three

precessional cycles.

But there are two other possible interpretations. HPB's exact words are: "The astronomical records of Universal History . . . are said to have had their beginnings with the Third Subrace of the Fourth Root-race or the Atlanteans. When was it? Occult data show that even since the time of the regular establishment of the Zodiacal calculations in Egypt, *the poles have been thrice inverted*." Since the Egyptians obtained their zodiac from the Atlanteans of Ruta (SD 2:436), perhaps the reference to Egypt is a blind and the three inversions actually refer to the period that has elapsed since the Atlantean zodiac was established in their third subrace. If the fifth root-race originated at the start of the fifth subrace of the fourth root-race, the period since the beginning of the third subrace of the Atlanteans would have covered nearly 5.5 subraces; each subrace lasts 49 precessional cycles (GdeP, *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, pp.35-9), so that the total period would have spanned approximately 260 precessional cycles. Since the earth's axis takes 90 precessional cycles to invert 360°, it would take 270 precessional cycles for it to undergo three complete inversions.

Another interpretation is that the passage may refer to three 180° inversions of the axis rather than three 360° inversions. Herodotus reported that the sun had twice risen where it now sets and twice set where it now rises during the past 341 generations, and he converts these 341 generations into a period of 11,340 years. However, this only provides enough time for the tilt of the axis to move about 1.7°. Herodotus explains that the figure of 11,340 years is based on a conversion factor of 100 years for every three generations. Curiously, this conversion factor would actually give a period of nearer 11,367 years. Perhaps Herodotus knew more than he was prepared to reveal, and by "generation" he meant a cycle or period with a length of 11,340 years. Multiplying 11,340 by 341 gives a period of 3,866,940 years, during





which time the axis would have moved about  $597^\circ$  ( $3 \times 180^\circ = 540^\circ$ ). This period began not long after the start of the satya-yuga, during the first subrace of the nascent Aryan race. At this time, the axis would have been inclined at an angle of about  $100^\circ$ . It would have been in the plane of the ecliptic when it reached an angle of  $270^\circ$ , and, after returning to  $0^\circ$  ( $360^\circ$ ), again at  $90^\circ$  and  $270^\circ$ , before reaching its present angle of  $336.5^\circ$  ( $23.5^\circ$ ). This is in agreement with HPB's statement that the Egyptian priests told Herodotus that "even since their first Zodiacal records were commenced, the Poles have been three times within the plane of the Ecliptic, as the Initiates taught" (SD 2:353). This is also sufficient time for the sun to have twice risen when it now sets and twice set where it now rises.

(The above speculations are based on the assumption that the inclination of the axis changes at an average rate of  $4^\circ$  every 25,920 years, and no account is taken of the influence of sudden disturbances of the axis, on which no definite information has been given.)

Hapgood rejects the possibility of poleshifts that involve a movement of the whole earth, but this idea is certainly found in the SD, whereas there appear to be no explicit references to crustal slippage. HPB's statement that although the entire earth has been periodically convulsed, "the conformation of the arctic and antarctic poles has but little altered" (SD 2:776) is difficult to reconcile with the idea of major displacements of the earth's crust. (According to modern science, the north pole — the northern extremity of the axis of rotation — is not rigidly fixed, but wanders over an area roughly 65 feet in diameter.) Another major cause of geological disturbances mentioned in the SD is changes in the earth's spin velocity — something not considered at all by Hapgood (see "The Spinning Earth" by F.J. Dick, *The Theosophical Path*, September 1920, pp.227-31). Robb asserts that the current slowing of the earth's spin velocity is caused by the accumulation of cosmic dust on its surface. This would imply that the spin

velocity has been slowing for hundreds of millions of years. GdeP, on the other hand, suggests that the speed of rotation increases and decreases at cyclic intervals (*Fountain-Source*, pp.161-2), and this also seems to be the meaning of the passage on the subject that HPB quotes from an ancient Commentary (SD 2:324-5).

According to W.Q. Judge, "Ice cataclysms come on not only from the sudden alteration of the poles but also from lowered temperature due to the alteration of the warm fluid currents in the sea and the hot magnetic currents in the earth, the first being known to science, the latter not" (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, p.140). He says that if the warm ocean currents were diverted from the shores of the British Isles, for example, the land could become covered with a thick layer of ice almost overnight. GdeP says that climatic conditions, including so-called glacial periods, and also most of the earth's heat, result from the interplay of electromagnetic forces between the earth and the veil of meteoric dust surrounding it (*Fundamentals of the Esoteric Philosophy*, pp.371-2). If all these factors were taken into account, they might help to explain the anomalous features of the last ice age that Hapgood cites as evidence of crust displacement.

The very existence of ice ages has been called into question by some researchers (including Fred Plummer), because much of the evidence could be far more readily explained by catastrophic flooding than by the movement of glaciers. However, there is no reason why ice ages should not end abruptly with massive floods. Judge makes the following intriguing remark on the causes of flooding: "Floods of general extent are caused by displacement of water from the subsidence or elevation of land, and by those combined with electrical change which induces a copious discharge of moisture. The latter is not a mere emptying of a cloud, but a sudden turning of vast bodies of fluids and solids into water." (*The Ocean of Theosophy*, pp.139-40)

HPB says that the last major cataclysm occurred about 12,000 years ago (SD 2:8-9), but she does not explicitly link this with a poleshift. This period coincided with the end of the last ice age, a rapid rise in sea level, and widespread flooding, together with large-scale volcanic activity, and the extinction of animal species in many parts of the world (as many as 40 million animals are thought to have perished in North America alone). There was a major flood in Central Asia about 12,000 years ago (SD 2:141), and Poseidonis, the last remaining Atlantean island in the Atlantic, was destroyed about 11.5 thousand years ago.

Robb links the cataclysm some 13,000 years ago with "the well-known discovery of the Siberian mammoth found with fresh flowers in its mouth frozen in situ, as if done in an instant". The bodies of about 80 well-preserved mammoths have been found frozen in the mud of Siberia and Alaska, and it is not clear which one Robb is referring to. The most famous is the Berezovka mammoth, which was found with unchewed grass and buttercups in its mouth and undigested vegetation in its stomach, but it is thought to have died about 44,000 years ago. The same date is given for the mammoth known as "Dima". A few specimens are thought to be nearly 50,000 years old, while others have been radiocarbon-dated as expiring at various later times up to and since the end of the last ice age. If these dates are at all reliable, the mammoths could not have died in a single cataclysmic event. It is possible, though, that some cases may have been connected with a poleshift. (See Hapgood, pp.249-79, and J. White, *Pole Shift* (1991), pp.17-35 and 419-23 for a full discussion of this subject.)

Robb claims that 6500 years ago, there was a sudden 200 ft rise in sea level around the world. It would be interesting to know the source of this information, as the general view seems to be that, with the melting of the ice sheets at the end of the last ice age, the world's sea levels rose by over 300

## UNIVERSAL PERSPECTIVE

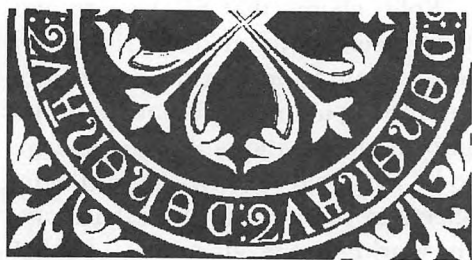
### THE SACRED FIRE AND THE ESOTERIC TRADITION

Jan H. Venema

(Translated from *Mededelingenbad* [Newsletter], March 1973)

AGNI (Fire) is one of the most ancient and principal gods, according to the *Veda*. He appears in three phases: in heaven as the sun, in mid-air as lightning, on earth as ordinary fire. He is considered as the mediator between men and gods, as protector of men and their homes, and as a witness of their actions.

Happy are those who can interpret this symbol of "the sacred fire" in the esoteric meaning, for the interpretation has a close connection with the deeper insight into the Esoteric Philosophy or Theosophy and the endeavor to make its teachings a living power in life. There will then always be the "fire" of well-controlled enthusiasm. The Esoteric Philosophy or Theosophy, a late Greek word which means divine wisdom, and which unfortunately by incorrect interpretations and all sorts of *additions* often has lost the original meaning for some, will always evoke in the sincere student that sacred fire, AGNI, in its many aspects. And the gladness which this fire brings, in spite of the also destructive aspect that it may have, will ever inspire him who feels it. It reminds us of the most sublime experience of Arjuna when listening to Krishna's words described in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. This fire radiates and works as a catching enthusiasm; it burns calmly and steadily, without flickering, without "blackened wicks"; it is recognized at once as sacred and yet very human.



Little by little, but steadily, it is evidently realized in philosophical and theosophical circles that the Wisdom Religion of the ages is the bearer of AGNI, the sacred fire, and its splendor "misrepresentations found in certain magazines, rises above all limitations and misrepresentations obscuring books, and in the writings of some groups. It rises above all superficial opinions and purely intellectual interpretations so often found, even if the writers or speakers may be called well-meaning. To call it "a system of thought," for instance, or "a sort of denomination" is definitely wrong and shows lack of serious study. For it concerns a real *philosophy of life*, which is based on the age-old teachings of the structure of the universe and its "laws" and which, therefore, may be called all-embracing. If this philosophy of life, after serious study and endeavor to "test" it, does not light the sacred fire in us, we are not connected with that all-embracing philosophy. The connection leads to a path along which lie the pearls of true brotherhood and impersonal love. As H.P. Blavatsky said: "These doctrines belong exclusively to no religion, and are confined to no society or time. They are the birthright of every human soul." (*The Key to Theosophy*). And in *Isis Unveiled* (Preface) she emphasizes that "Truth is alone eternal and supreme."

It will be clear that the serious student of the teachings will exercise utmost caution in interpreting the depths of "the ocean of knowledge" indicated by the words *The Esoteric Tradition*. He will realize that the intellectual fire is insufficient and that it is possible to light only the lower aspects of AGNI, the cold, lower *manasic* aspects, which obscure the higher (Buddhic) light. He will be careful and try to give the right and verifiable truths of the age-old teachings, stating the *sources*, pointing continually to the *universality*, in accordance with "*Iti maya srutam*" (thus have I heard). He will welcome with



joy the presentations in which this universality is shown, rejecting inexact representations and sometimes even fantastic personal consideration, and trace the causes of them, however difficult it may be to remove long-established delusions. In this world the channels and vehicles are needed to spread the knowledge of the genuine philosophy. However, when the times are changing and the exoteric truths have penetrated everywhere in the world (we are thinking of present scientific, philosophic and religious extension of insight), the channels and vehicles have to be revised, even lose the right to exist, unless they change their work in such a way that the old *esoteric tradition* is maintained, in which case it is possible to reach the individual human being in the first place, owing to the more esoteric aspects. In this way much more can be done for the spreading of the genuine philosophy of life in this world. In this time it is useful to read once more the Preface of 1888 to *The Secret Doctrine* and important parts of the Introduction. Let us also refer to Gottfried de Purucker's words in *The Esoteric Tradition*, II, 889, in which the writer points out that a popularization of the teachings (leading to sectarianism and superficial knowledge) is simply impossible:

continued from page 25

"Here once more, and with extreme reluctance, one feels the need to stating that there is a good deal of the teaching of the Esoteric Philosophy which simply cannot be openly stated in a published book, because such teaching belongs to the highly recondite and extremely difficult thought of the esoteric studies reserved for the few. The author of the present work desires to state once for all, and with all the emphasis at his command, that neither this declaration of certain esoteric teachings which are too sacred to be given to the public, nor other similar declarations made in the course of the present work, are in any sense of the word to be considered or looked upon as 'claims' made by him to possessing 'superior' or wonderful knowledge. The author absolutely disavows not only any such intention of 'claiming' anything, but must point out that merely stating that the Esoteric Philosophy contains wide ranges of teaching or doctrine which are incommunicable to the public is making no 'claims' whatsoever, but is the simple statement of something that ought to be known to every student of the Archaic Wisdom..."

Those who think about and understand these words will try to avoid giving superficial explanations of "rebirth" and after-death states in their writings and lectures; they will indeed try to find the *way* by which one can belong to "the few" and evoke the higher aspects of AGNI, the Buddhic light, which is not for ourselves only and which connects us the "the heart of the universe."

*The Eclectic Theosophist, May 15, 1973*



feet between 15,000 and 4000 BC, sometimes at a rate of over 30 feet per century, and that the period around 10,000 BC was marked by an especially rapid rise in sea level. Robb also claims that Noah's flood occurred 6500 years ago. According to Usher's biblical chronology, Noah's flood—which HPB calls "a purely mythical rendering of old traditions" (SD 2:141)—occurred in 2349 BC. There is no evidence of a worldwide flood at that time, but it is known that there was a major flood in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley around 2800 BC, and there is also evidence of other local floods in this region between 3000 and 4000 BC.

If Robb is right about cataclysms occurring every 6500 years (a quarter of a precessional cycle), then since he says that the last two took place 13,000 and 6500 years ago, we would be due for another any time now. HPB and GdeP predict that a major cataclysm will occur towards the end of the present precessional cycle, which began about 9000 years ago (marking the beginning of our fourth (European) national race) and will end in about 16,000 years, when many parts of Europe will be submerged (SD 2:330-1, 1:439fn; *Studies in Occult Philosophy*, pp.35-9; *Fountain-Source of Occultism*, p.164). We can of course expect a long series of lesser cataclysms leading up to this time.

Robb states that the north magnetic pole has been located in many different places on the earth's surface. The current scientific theory is that the apparent "wandering" of the magnetic poles is actually an illusion created by continental drift, though the issue is far from settled. He also refers to the theory that there have been many reversals of the earth's magnetic field. Contrary to the impression most scientists like to give, the evidence for reversals of the geomagnetic field is far from conclusive; the data are too meagre and the dating is too uncertain to be sure that they relate to global events rather than localized disturbances. Scientists do not have a sat-

isfactory theory of how the earth's magnetic field is generated or of what causes the variations to which it is subject. At present, the north and south magnetic poles are situated about 875 and 1690 miles from the north and south geographic poles respectively. KH says that there are strong magnetic poles above the surface of the earth, and that one of them revolves around the north geographic pole in a periodic cycle of several hundred years. Modern science recognizes that the magnetic poles drift slowly westward around the geographic poles. It also claims that what we call the north magnetic pole is actually a south magnetic pole, but KH flatly contradicts this. The north pole of the compass points to the ground at the north magnetic pole because it is repelled by the real north magnetic pole above the earth's surface. (*Mahatma Letters*, pp.168-9)

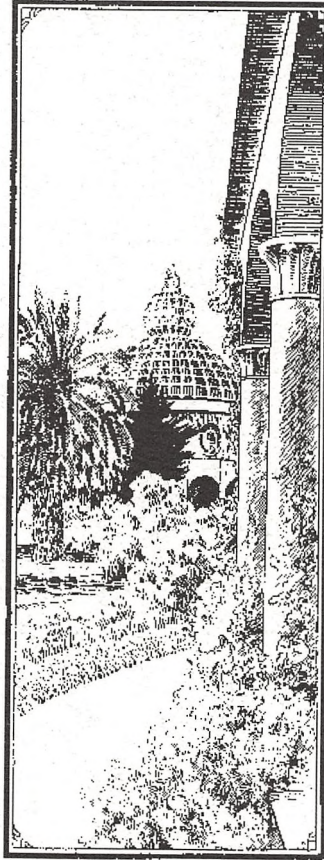
One final point. The starting date of the kali-yuga is usually given as 18 February 3102 BC. Some references, however, give the year as 3101 BC. There is no contradiction here, for there are two ways of giving dates BC. In the usual (chronological) method, no year zero is counted between 1 BC and 1 AD, while in the other method, often used by astronomers, a year zero is counted. Either way, the year 1 AD was not the 3103rd year of the kali-yuga but the 3102nd (as Subba Row states — *Esoteric Writings*, p.55). This means that the first 5000 years of the kali-yuga ended in 1899 and not 1898, and that the year 2000 will be the 5101st year of kali-yuga and not the 5102nd (nor the 5103rd as Robb suggests). The clairvoyant W. Scott-Elliott (author of the fanciful work *The Story of Atlantis and the Lost Lemuria*, with an introduction by A.P. Sinnett) states that Poseidonis sank in 9564 BC. This date is derived from a letter to Sinnett from KH, written in 1882, in which KH says that Poseidonis sank 11,446 years ago (*Mahatma Letters*, pp.151, 155). In the chronological method of counting, Poseidonis would have sunk in 9565 BC.



*“One day as I was about to step on a dry leaf, I saw the leaf in the ultimate dimension. I saw that it was not really dead, but that it was merging with the moist soil in order to appear on the tree the following spring in another form. I smiled at the leaf and said,*

*‘You are pretending.’ Everything is pretending to be born and pretending to die, including that leaf.”*

*—Thich Nhat Hanh in “Living Buddha, Living Christ”*



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